THE LIFE

OF

KARL FOLLEN

SPINDLER

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THE BAKER & TAYLOR COMPANY
NEW YORK

THE CUNNINGHAM, CURTISS & WELCH COMPANY
LOS ANGELES, CAL.

THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

THE MARUZEN-KABUSHIKI-KAISHA
TOKYO, OSAKA, KYOTO, FUKUOKA, SENDAI

THE MISSION BOOK COMPANY
SHANGHAI

KARL W. HIERSEMANN
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HISTORICAL MONOGRAPHS
PUBLISHED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
THE GERMAN-AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF ILLINOIS

Edited by JULIUS GOEBEL, Ph. D.

No. 1

THE LIFE
OF
KARL FOLLEN

A STUDY IN GERMAN-AMERICAN CULTURAL RELATIONS

By

GEORGE W. SPINDLER, Ph. D.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.
1917

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Published April, 1917

FOREWORD.

The following work is based upon Follen's writings, contemporary references to him hitherto uncollected, and previous biographical material. With all the available sources gathered from various libraries in the United States I have sought to present Follen's life as a whole and at the same time to throw new light upon both his European and American career. Through the kindness of Professor Julius Goebel I had access to a number of Follen's recently discovered letters which made it possible for me to explain Follen's much criticised and misinterpreted turn to the ministry. On account of the European war some of Follen's early essays are at present inaccessible; some of his later ones are extant only in various old American periodicals. These along with several of the more valuable, though almost forgotten, essays in his published works I hope to give to the public at some future time.

Follen's literary remains, including some of his diaries, his fragmentary work on psychology, and other valuable writings, probably lie buried in some unmarked grave. The late John Cabot of Brookline, Massachusetts, who had charge of the Follen family possessions, sought in vain to locate these papers for me. He informed me, however, that to the best of his recollection this material had been turned over either to Professor Kuno Francke or to the librarian of Harvard University, but I have been assured by both of these gentlemen that they have no knowledge of its whereabouts.

To my friend and teacher, Professor Julius Goebel, at whose suggestion it was undertaken, is due the credit for whatever merit this work possesses, and I take this occasion to express my deepest gratitude for his kindly direction and scholarly criticism. To Dr. Alexander Green, my friend and former colleague, I am under obligation also for helpful suggestions.

G. W. S.

Purdue University, January 1917.

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Karl Follen

INTRODUCTION.

This Monograph is not only an attempt to rescue from oblivion the memory of the pioneer of Germanic studies in America and of the influence of his work in this direction, but it aims also to present for the first time an authoritative account of his life.

The best existing biography of Follen is that published by his widow in 1842.[1] Valuable as this biography is, it is, however, in no sense a scientific work but rather an attempt of a devoted wife to pay a loving tribute to the character of a noble husband in recording the chief events of his life. Many important sources which throw light upon Follen's European career were at the time still unavailable. The reasons for Follen's antislavery activity were only partly explained and his motives for joining the Unitarian movement were wrongly attributed to the influence of W. E. Channing.

While Gustav Körner and Friedrich Kapp recognize[2] Follen as one of the most distinguished and influential German-Americans in the first half of the 19th century, they devote only a few pages to his life and his various activities. Friedrich Münch,[3] a friend and follower of Follen in the Burschenschaft movement, has contributed some useful information on Follen's connection with this movement, but in several important instances has unfortunately erred; moreover his account of Follen's life in America is based entirely upon Mrs. Follen's work and contains nothing new. Ratter-

[1] Vol. I of Follen's Works.

[2] Körner, *Das deutsche Element;* Kapp, *Deutsche Rundschau,* Bd. 25, 1880.

[3] *Gesammelte Schriften,* p. 39ff.

mann's [1] short biography is likewise based wholly upon the same source and presents, therefore, no new information.

The chief German authorities on Follen are Treitschke, Biedermann, Haupt, and Pregizer, all of whom have discussed only his connection with the German liberal movement without any attempt to give an account of his career in the United States. Haupt's work on "Follen und die Giessener Schwarzen" is the most thorough and comprehensive study of Follen as the founder and leader of the Giessen Burschenschaft. In his discussion of Follen's political ideas Pregizer confines himself wholly to Follen's early life without taking into account his later and more mature views. Owing to their limited knowledge of Follen's later life both Treitschke and Pregizer have arrived at certain conclusions which seem to be untenable. In general German historians have hitherto dealt almost exclusively with Follen's early life, regarding him for the most part only as a political radical and revolutionist.

Since the German wars of liberation are beginning at present to be viewed not simply as a struggle against foreign domination but also, and above all, as the first powerful rise of German national feeling, which aimed at national unity,[2] it seems now to become possible to give a more correct interpretation to Follen's youthful activity. For only against the background of the movement for national independence and from the spiritual forces which at that time exalted the German mind to undreamed of heights can Follen's historical significance be understood. It was the time when the best men of the nation first became conscious that only in their own nationality could that higher humanity of which the great poets and thinkers had dreamed be realized; the time when in the life-and-death grapple with Napoleon the people first became aware of their strength and their rights, and when the German nation, in spite of its political discord, once more experienced, for the first time in centuries, the joy of unity and demanded for the rejuvenated spirit the body of a new

[1] *Gesammelte Werke,* X.

[2] Lamprecht, *Deutscher Aufstieg,* 1750-1914, p. 28.
Meinecke, *Die deutsche Erhebung von 1814,* p. 10ff.

national state. The impulse toward national regeneration and a sound physical life found expression in the gymnastic endeavors of Jahn, and the national exaltation as a whole seemed to receive its consecration by the awakening of a new religious spirit,—an awakening such as Germany had not experienced since the days of the Reformation.

It will be seen that Follen as a product of the classical period of German literature and philosophy assimilated even in his youth the spiritual forces of his time, and that these not only determined his activity in Europe but also that of his American career. As a representative of these ideals he thus became the forerunner of thousands, who in the '30s and especially in the later '40s followed him to America. It may justly be said that no other nation in the world was so deeply affected by the German patriotic movements of the 19th century as was this country. The period subsequent to Follen's coming is one of the most important also in our national history. It was during this period that the higher intellectual life of the young nation began to emancipate[1] itself from English traditions and to form independent ideals in education, philosophy, and literature. At the same time there was developing within the Union a political conflict, the final outcome of which had to demonstrate whether the high ideals upon which the Republic was founded were to prevail or not. In all these great national movements and struggles Follen and those who followed after him were destined to play an important rôle.

[1] Channing, *Remarks on National Literature Complete Works*, p. 137.
Barrett, Wendell, *Literary History of America*, p. 295 f.
Higginson, T. W., *Cheerful Yesterdays—Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 79, p. 490.

PART ONE.

FOLLEN IN EUROPE.

CHAPTER I.

HIS PROPAGANDA FOR GERMAN UNITY.

To trace the rise and growth of German national consciousness, of which Follen became one of the foremost representatives, even in outline, would in itself be an extensive study. For the present purpose let it suffice to say that the undercurrent of patriotism making itself felt first in the patriotic poetry of Klopstock and in the effects of the deeds of Frederick the Great, then growing broader and deeper at the opening of the 19th century, burst forth into a great surge of patriotic feeling as the Germans watched their national inheritance crumble away beneath the heel of the foreign conqueror. Through the writings of such men as Fichte, Arndt and Jahn, the Germans came to realize that Teutonic civilization could be preserved only by means of national independence and a national state. Fichte's famous "Addresses to the German Nation" marked the transition from cosmopolitanism to patriotism, and in the great national awakening that followed German national unity had its inception.

In the wars of liberation the German people united especially to regain their national independence, but in accordance with the promises of their rulers they expected also a closer union of all the German states and a greater degree of civic freedom as a reward for their patriotic devotion in the hour of national peril. When the victorious German armies returned home they demanded national unity in order to avoid future national calamity and looked forward, consequently, in confident expectation to a new political life. In their attempt to formulate a plan of union only two possibilities presented themselves: either to form a German confederation or to dissolve the existing governments and in their stead found one

German state. The patriots naturally demanded the latter plan; most of them favored a limited monarchy while the more liberal-minded were eager for a republic. "But the majority of those who were enthusiastic for one German state would have been indignant at the suggestion that this demand expressly implied the dethroning of their ruling princes." [1]

The problem of German unity was one of supreme difficulty, for the international Congress of Vienna was more concerned with the general settlement of European affairs than with the future welfare of Germany, and the diplomats from other countries naturally did not desire a strong, united Germany. But the greatest obstacle to the establishment of a central government was the unwillingness of the German princes to surrender any of their sovereignty. Believing, however, that they ought at least to unite for mutual protection they finally passed an act organizing Germany into a loose confederation of independent states. As an opponent both of national unity and popular sovereignty Metternich, the ruling spirit of the assembly, succeeded also in thwarting the demand for constitutional government. As a result none of the rulers except the Grand Duke of Weimar took any immediate steps to grant their subjects a voice in governmental affairs. The German people had been temperate in their demands, asking merely for a government that would be more in conformity with the existing views of human rights. Bitter and profound was their disappointment when their dream of national unity and civic freedom turned out to be a mere illusion. While the older men with few exceptions seemed to accept the hopeless political situation with a spirit of pessimistic resignation, it is highly significant that the widespread dissatisfaction with the reactionary attitude of the German rulers found its most fervent expression among the younger generation of German patriots. Now that the foreign enemy had been overcome the academic youth, in whom the spirit of Fichte and Schleiermacher still survived, united to promote the welfare of their common country, or as a contemporary

[1] Jastrow, *Geschichte des deutschen Einheitstraumes,* 109.

has it: "In the academic youth the German nation first became conscious of its unity." [1] By exalting the idea of a common fatherland and by fostering a broad unsectarian spirit in church and state these young patriots hoped to lay the foundation of a new national life. The first attempt [2] to organize the academic youth into an association on national lines was made at Giessen in 1814. Foremost in this movement was Karl Follen.

Karl Theodor Christian Follen was the second son of Christoph Follenius,[3] advocate and judge at Giessen in Hesse-Darmstadt. He was born on the 4th of September, 1796, at the home of his grandfather in the village of Romrod, whither his mother had gone to escape the turmoil occasioned by the French occupation of Giessen. After his mother's death, when he was only three years old, his brothers and sisters were sent to live with their grand-parents while he remained at home in close companionship with his father, a circumstance which tended on the one hand to increase his natural precocity, on the other to develop in him an unnatural seriousness of character. After several years his father married again, which, along with the return of the other children to the parental roof, supplied the home life necessary to childhood. Under the direction of his devoted stepmother the sensitive, backward boy received his first elementary instruction and was sent to the public schools where he made rapid progress in the common branches. Since he had not been accustomed to the companionship of children he took little interest in the sports and games of his schoolmates; in fact he had little relish for the ordinary pleasures of childhood. As he grew older, however, a close companionship sprang up between him and his elder brother, Adolf, which gradually developed into an intimate and abiding friendship.

While still a mere child Follen began to manifest certain

[1] Wolfgang Menzel, *Denkwürdigkeiten,* 119.

[2] Stern, *Geschichte Europas,* 1815—1871, I, 446.

[3] The latinized form of the name was dropped by Follen when he came to America.

characteristics for which he became distinguished in later years. Whenever his brothers laughed at his little idiosyncracies he would often fly into a fit of uncontrollable anger. This fault he soon resolved to overcome. He was naturally timid and as a result had a great dread of passing the graveyard at night. In order to conquer this weakness he forced himself to go there after dark and to remain until he had overcome his fear.[1] Being easily affected with dizziness when looking from a height, he subdued this weakness by walking daily upon the parapet of a high bridge with his eyes fixed upon the rushing stream beneath, until by perseverance he was able to run backward and forward upon the narrow footing. Thus by great and constant effort he at last acquired that perfect self-control which was a distinguishing trait of his character. In these early years he began also to manifest that spirit of independent thought and free investigation for which he was noted in after life. He often lay awake at night reflecting over the mysteries of nature and the religious instruction he had received at school, and when he could find no satisfactory answer to some puzzling question would arise and beg his father to satisfy his curiosity. If things were not explained to his satisfaction he formed decided opinions for himself in all matters that seemed ambiguous to his childish mind, accepting what seemed good and rejecting what seemed unreasonable. When he was scarcely twelve years of age he conceived the idea that if everyone should of his own free will make himself an image of Christ it would lay the foundation for a new state of society. Thus early did he in a general way formulate a conception of life which, broadened and modified by subsequent study, became the basis of his mature religious and political views.

After passing through the common school he entered the gymnasium where he distinguished himself in all his studies, especially in the ancient and modern languages. Among his teachers none exercised so great an influence on his early

[1] *Works of Charles Follen,* I, 8. In the following pages these works will be referred to simply as *Works.*

development as Friedrich Gottlieb Welcker,[1] a man imbued with an ardent love of freedom and fatherland. Although the boy's patriotism had, no doubt, already been awakened by conversations with his father on the Napoleonic rule in Germany, it was his teacher who first aroused his interest in political questions and contemporary historical events. Welcker was a true German patriot and sought to inspire his pupils also with a love of fatherland and a hatred of French domination.[2] To this end he interested them first of all in Schiller's patriotic poetry. Thus Schiller became the light and companion of Follen's early days. The thing that impressed Follen most of all, as he states in his lectures [3] many years later, was the fact that Schiller was a poet of freedom, that he resisted all kinds of unnatural and unreasonable restraints, and that he preached the gospel of freedom in the Kantian sense as synonymous with the moral nature of man. Welcker further inspired his pupils by giving them patriotic themes upon which to write compositions. Two such essays from young Follen's pen in 1811 give evidence of his growing patriotism and his longing for freedom, even at the price of a martyr's death. He expressed himself in this manner: [4]

"The Germans lack patriotism; in learning they take the lead, but they lack energy. It is the duty of everybody to live and to die for the common weal. Then only can they serve God and the fatherland. It breaks my heart when I see how the worm of tyranny is daily gnawing at the vitals of our ancestral freedom. The stars of hope have set and never will the sweet morning dawn. But living or dead the goal will yet be attained."

In the spring of 1813, when scarcely more than sixteen years of age, young Follen graduated from the Gymnasium

[1] Welcker was afterwards noted as an acheologist and classical philologian, and became professor of ancient literature at Göttingen where he made the acquaintance of the American students, George Ticknor and Edward Everett, to whom he gave Follen letters of recommendation when the latter left Europe.

[2] Haupt, *Karl Follen und die Giessener Schwarzen,* 6.

[3] *Works,* IV, 388.

[4] Haupt, 22.

and at once began the study of law at the university of Giessen. It was at this time that the growing patriotic movement, such as Germany had never witnessed before, swelled into that great popular uprising against the foreign oppressor. In response to the appeal of the king of Prussia to the nation the German youth rushed to arms and with noble enthusiasm went out to battle for their dearest rights. Inspired by Jahn's "Teutsches Volkstum," Fichte's "Reden an die deutsche Nation," Welcker's teachings and example, and especially by Körner's heroic death, Follen with his two brothers joined a student corps of riflemen and entered the struggle for national independence, ready to sacrifice his dearest hopes upon the altar of freedom. At the close of the campaign in 1814 the brothers returned home safely and with new-born ardor Follen again took up his study of jurisprudence and theology at Giessen. Imbued with higher ideals of patriotism and possessed of a more serious view of life as a result of his experiences in the war, his early religious and political ideas now shaped themselves into a system somewhat as follows:[1] All tyranny whatsoever is sinful, for man is and of right ought to be free. Nobody is free who is a slave to his own passions, who fears death, or who does not believe in immortality. Since the end and aim of life is Christlike perfection, that is, perfect freedom, men are in duty bound first to subdue the tyrant in their own breasts and then to oppose all unjust dominion without; in other words, to lead a life of purity, to submit to the law of justice, and to promote universal brotherhood as taught by Christ. Believing that the adoption of these principles would effect a regeneration of all mankind he now entered upon a course of activity which gradually developed into a systematic propaganda for the political, social, and religious reform of Germany.

HIS PROMOTION OF THE BURSCHENSCHAFT.

Although the German patriots prior to the wars of liberation gave passionate expression to their longings for national unity, the fact must not be overlooked that the object was not

[1] *Works,* I, 21f.

so much the welding of the German states into a strong political whole for the internal welfare of the country as their mutual cooperation for the establishment of national independence. Even after the latter had been attained the political writers of the day had only the haziest notions concerning the problem of national organization.[1] Wishes, hopes, and theories there were in abundance, but community of interests and definite programs were wanting. But the academic youth took a step in advance of their elders by formulating a definite plan of action. In the first place they conceived the idea of reorganizing university life along new lines and of making it thus the model for a larger national life. To this end they began a general movement for the purpose of forming a closer union of all the students, a true Burschenschaft, to supersede the old, established Landsmannschaften, which had hitherto dominated student affairs in the most arbitrary and tyrannical manner. These provincial clubs not only fostered false notions of honor and a system of caste, but preserved also a feeling of localism, a spirit of particularism, which was one of the greatest weaknesses of German life. Ignoring provincial lines and inculcating a larger ideal of association, the new organization on the other hand was to be national in its aims. Taking Fichte, Jahn, Arndt, and Schleiermacher as their examples and leaders, and pledging themselves to lead a life of industry, sobriety, and chastity, these young idealists hoped by means of physical and mental training, by patriotic inspiration and moral elevation to lead the state of the future to the goal of civic freedom and national unity.

This patriotic outburst during the wars of liberation was accompanied by an intense religious fervor. The supremacy of the moral law, strict obedience to the inner voice of duty, as taught by Kant and Fichte, had prepared the way for a new religious life in Germany. The Romanticists had awakened a new interest in Christianity and a deep feeling of mystic piety, while Schleiermacher through his Addresses on Religion aroused a keener realization of man's dependence on God. Through the national disaster the Germans had become

[1] Jastrow, 129f.

more serious and introspective, and consequently more receptive to the new spiritual life that was dawning. Devotion to humanity rather than personal happiness and culture came to be looked upon as the end and aim of existence. To this young generation to be German meant to be religious; hence the patriotism of the Burschenschaft movement went hand in hand with a fervent religious exaltation.

The Burschenschaft movement originated and reached its climax in Giessen and Jena, receiving its most characteristic stamp from the contrast between the general atmosphere of these two universities.[1] The latter had long enjoyed a reputation for its liberal traditions and its romantic, idyllic academic life, while the former was characterized by a spirit of narrow conservatism and noted for the traditionally rough and disorderly conduct of its students. In both universities duels took the place of arguments, and the Komment, the self-constituted laws of the Landsmannschaften, was arbitrary in the extreme. But in Giessen especially sectional feeling ran high, and the tyranny of the few over the many became almost unbearable; the rowdyism of the students had brought them into numerous conflicts with the laws of the land and this tended also to increase the reactionary attitude both of the ducal and of the university authorities. Such was the status of affairs with which the reformers had to cope in Giessen. In marked contrast therefore to the burschikos character of the Jena movement, that of Giessen took the form of a political propaganda. The heart and soul of this movement was Karl Follen who, bent upon his project for the social and political reform of Germany, inspired his followers to the highest pitch of enthusiasm for his revolutionary program.

Under the influence of Fichte's "Addresses to the German Nation," which advocated a new system of education for the creation of a new national spirit, and hence as a means to national unity, Follen began his propaganda by organizing literary clubs for the promotion of patriotism and science. Largely due to the efforts of himself and his elder brother, Adolf, there was organized in Giessen as early as the autumn

[1] Cf. Braun, *Westermann's Monatshefte*, XXXV, 225.

of 1814 a "Deutsche Lesegesellschaft," in the reading room of which were to be found political newspapers and pamphlets, and in whose meetings the writings of such men as Möser, Schiller, Körner, Arndt, and Fichte were read and discussed.[1] The members of this society adopted the old German garb,—long hair, black velvet coat, and dagger, and under the influence of "Turnvater" Jahn, who had already done so much through his gymnastics to cultivate manliness and patriotic sentiment in the German youth, devoted themselves diligently to physical culture also. But on account of rivalries and jealousies, and especially on account of an attempt by a few of the leaders of the association to abolish the practice of dueling, which had become one of the most baneful customs of student life, the organization was soon broken up. In the following summer, 1815, a small group of the more radical, including the Follen brothers, banded together into a league called the "Germania," with patriotic, moral and scholarly aims. From the color of their academic coats they were dubbed the "Blacks"[2] by the other students, and on account of their stern morality and opposition to rowdyism soon came into conflict with the Landsmannschaften. Follen and his friends soon became so repugnant to the majority of the Giessen students, as Wesselhöft observes,[3] that the latter refused to fraternize with them. Denounced as political conspirators the Blacks were compelled to dissolve this league, but immediately formed a new one under the name of "Deutscher Bildungs- und Freundschaftsverein."[4] As a condition to entrance into this association the candidate had to be a true Christian, a real German, and a bona fide student. Before the end of the year this society also was obliged to disband, but the persecution by the Landsmannschaften continued and the Blacks had to maintain themselves by frequent duels in

[1] Haupt, 6.

[2] Ibid., 12. In his *Aus Deutschlands trübster Zeit* Münch erroneously dates the origin of the Blacks at the end of 1816.

[3] *Teutsche Jugend in weiland Burschenschaften und Turngemeinden,* 80.

[4] Haupt, 12.

which Follen took a leading part. Concerning this struggle Follen's widow gives the following account:[1]

"He was often challenged and called upon to use his sword against these bullies, but he has told me that he never used it in a purely personal quarrel. He was skillful in the use of the weapon and was so calm and collected that he almost always gained the victory, but never abused it. These duels with the broadsword seldom endangered life, and at that time he thought himself justified in occasionally using this means for the defense of truth and justice. It was one of his great purposes and of the party of which he was a leader to put a check to this evil and dangerous custom; but he thought had he not the courage and power to defend himself by force of arms, he should not have the same influence with his fellow students in urging other and moral means for the settlement of differences; he could not even have remained in the university."

Concerning the aims of these literary clubs Follen himself records the following:[2] "They were organized partly among students, partly among other young men for reciprocal exchange of views on philosophy, religion, and political subjects, and held together for the most part by the common bond of like ideas,—an ideal friendship whose simple sincerity and fervor is so characteristically German. The members had public opinion on their side through their zeal for science and their strict morality. In their meetings, which often occurred without any previous appointment, the most important truths of religion, ethics, jurisprudence, politics, and especially of scientific subjects were discussed. The sad condition of the fatherland without unity and freedom was discussed also, and some were of the opinion that the ideal national life needed above all a unity of faith for one Christian German Church. Others held that the church is a private society in the state and believed that the latter should have a different form, which according to some should be a limited monarchy, ac-

[1] *Works,* I, 26.

[2] "Ueber die deutsche Inquisition"—Published in Johannes Wits *Fragmente aus meinem Leben,* III, Sec. 1, 187.

cording to others a republic. Upon these subjects speeches were made and disquisitions written."

Unyielding in his determination to proceed with his original program, Follen continued his efforts to bring the student body into a closer union with a view to establishing a student republic as a model for a larger national organization. In his History[1] of the Christian German Burschenschaft Follen wrote as follows concerning the movement in Giessen: "When local divisions and an oppressive system of rank were wasting, by angry collisions, the free powers of individuals and of the whole student body, there arose among the students of Giessen the idea of a Christian-German Republic in which the officers should be on a complete level with all the others, where the will of the whole, obtained by a free, general discussion in assemblies open to all, should rule in the concerns of the students; and where in a close union of all their youthful powers, in their manners and conduct, and in their public sentiment an earnest, patriotic effort, a striving after learning, physical culture, and freedom as citizens should be unfolded. Many students who were spiritually united by the same striving after Christian and national progress went steadily onward to the attainment of this object in friendly union, held together only by a true inward indissoluble bond of conviction."

Under the leadership of Follen the Blacks continued their discussions and consultations in private throughout the year 1816. In a public assembly of the student body in the autumn of that year they offered a set of resolutions to the effect:[2] That all students should be free and equal among themselves from the day of entrance to the university so long as they conduct themselves honorably; that all associations arrogating to themselves any peculiar power, and opposing thereby the establishing of equality and unity in the university, should be dissolved; that a code of rules for the government of the students and a court for the settlement of all questions

[1] Quoted in part in *Works*, I, 30—50. Haupt and Pregizer give the original title of this history as *Beiträge zur Geschichte der teutschen Samtschulen seit dem Freiheitskriege*, 1813.

[2] "History of the Giessener Burschenschaft,"—*Works*, I, 40.

of honor should be established; that an assembly of all Christian German students, united in a free student community, should, as the only justly authorized association, exercise all legislative and judicial functions in all student affairs; and that for the purpose of a free, progressive development of student life, a free German Burschen-Commonwealth should be established in each of the German universities.

These propositions were greeted with shouts of approval, but owing to the opposition of the Landsmannschaften and the hostile attitude of the university authorities, who regarded this movement for liberty as dangerous to the established order, nothing was accomplished. Undaunted, however, in their efforts for academic reform, the Blacks sought to establish at least a court of honor for the adjustment of differences among the students. After deliberating among themselves they finally adopted a set of laws under the title of the "Ehrenspiegel." Follen himself drafted most of the statutes and prefaced them with the following lines,[1] which indicate the Christian, republican spirit of the work:

Der Gottheit Blitzstrahl, der aus finstrer Wolke
Aus dieser Sturmzeit herrlich sich entzündet,
Die Liebe, die uns All' in Gott verbündet,
Als Gottes Stimm' in Menschen, wie im Volke,
Lebendig neu der Menschheit Urbild gründet,
Die durch den Heiland,
Die jetzt und weiland
Uns durch so viel Blutzeugen ist verbündet,
Sie gibt das Feuer uns zum kühnen Handeln,
Das Licht, um frei der Wahrheit Bahn zu wandeln.

Among the several principles set up in the Ehrenspiegel it was decreed:[2]

"That the relation of individual students to each other must be a relation of unconditional equality, without reference to any particular faith, country, or rank arising from age or family connections.

[1] Ibid.,—*Works,* I, 50.

[2] Ibid.,—*Works,* I, 35ff.

"Honor ennobles at the university, but honor will be rendered to everyone who is animated by a pure zeal for a learned and worthy education, by a holy devotion to the faith and the country to which he, with free conviction, adheres.

"There can be no relation of honor without a relation of justice; consequently every duel is mischievous and sinful if it is ascertained that there is right on one side and injustice on the other, or a misunderstanding on both. But the ascertaining of the right requires a court, and among students it must be a court of arbitration.

"No single department of art or science suffices us, and as little can a single mode of bodily exercise. Only a constant progress towards knowledge and truth, enlarged by friendly communion, united to a social, gymnastic development of all bodily powers, can lead to a free harmony of one being, in parts as in the whole.

"Let the model of a Christian-German Burschenschaft be our perpetual ideal! Let this elevated spirit of union fraternize the whole Burschenschaft into one republic and covenant of honor, which may form itself independently in each university, but yet each one as an image or part of the whole; strong in united action, ruled by a noble morality, springing from free conviction, and enlightened by public sentiment, which constitutes the conscience of this as of every other republic."

Early in 1817 the Ehrenspiegel was submitted to the general student body publicly assembled, but the Landsmannschaften refused to take part in the proceedings. Thereupon about sixty of Follen's adherents pledged themselves to its principles, associating themselves thus into the Christian-German Burschenschaft of Giessen, and invited all other students to join them in their public meetings. To this association Follen dedicated his stirring song of freedom, entitled the "Turnstaat,"[1] which sounds the keynote to his program for civic freedom, for the religious and political unity of Germany.

[1] *Freye Stimmen frischer Jugend*—No. 1.

In consequence of the new organization a violent partisan strife arose. The adherents of the Ehrenspiegel were forthwith excommunicated from the student body by the Landsmannschaften, and all sorts of calumnies were heaped upon them with the object of making them odious to the authorities. They were branded as Jacobins, black bandits, and state traitors, and accused of revolutionary designs against the reigning sovereigns. As a result of these serious charges the university senate instituted an investigation, seeking in every way to discover whether the Blacks were guilty of dangerous political activity. The two important features of this examination were the charges [1] that Follen had sought to found an academic free-state for the training of demagogues and preachers of freedom, and that the Ehrenspiegel was a dangerous, revolutionary document because its declared object was the good of the whole country rather than that of separate provinces. Although the charge against the Blacks of revolutionary aims had in all probability some foundation, the latter were after a long examination declared innocent, but the senate decreed that the Burschenschaft should henceforth be considered a forbidden association. From this time on the Giessen Blacks maintained no outward organization, but through the exertions of Follen the inner bond of sympathy, conviction, and common ideals was cemented between them more strongly than ever. In private they continued their propaganda for union and liberty in academic life.

THE WARTBURG FESTIVAL.

From Giessen and Jena the Burschenschaft movement spread rapidly until it had by this time found footing in sixteen different universities. Black-red-gold was adopted as the emblem and Arndt's well-known song, "Sind wir vereint zur guten Stunde," the hymn of the fraternity. For the twofold purpose of uniting the several Burschenschaften into one general organization and also of commemorating two great national events, the battle of Leipzig and the tercentenary of the

[1] "History of the Giessen Burschenschaft"—*Works*, I, 47f.

Reformation, plans were made for a great student festival at the Wartburg. This movement was set on foot in Jena, but according to Massmann, the historian of the event, the idea of the celebration originated among Follen's circle of Blacks, who had entered into close relations with the Jena Burschen.[1] The principles which the friends of freedom and unity advocated were embodied by the Jena students in a memorial[2] to be presented at the Wartburg meeting. This document consisted of thirty-five articles, of which the following declarations were the most pertinent:

"Germany is and shall remain a unit. The more the Germans are divided by different states, the more sacred is the duty of every German to strive for the maintenance of unity and fatherland. For this ideal the heroes of 1813 fell, and for this ideal all have fought and will fight. With this in view do we celebrate the 18th of October. Should the Germans forget this ideal they ought again to pass under the foreign yoke. The doctrine that there is a North and a South Germany is false and pernicious and has emanated from an evil spirit; the distinction is merely geographical. There is a North and a South Germany just as there is a right and left side of a man; but the man is one and has one mind and one heart, and Germany is one and shall have one mind and one heart. The doctrine that there is a protestant and a catholic Germany is false and unfortunate and has come from an evil enemy. Whether protestant or catholic, Germans are Germans and belong to one fatherland. Germans are brothers and shall be friends; hence a war between German states would be a crime. If one German state is attacked then all Germany is attacked. In war against a foreign enemy all Germans must unite for common defense; in peace all must unite to preserve

[1] Haupt, 36. According to Leo, *Meine Jugendzeit,* 151, the idea came from Jahn's circle in Berlin.

[2] Given in full by Herbst, *Ideale und Irrtümer des akademischen Lebens,* 184-205. These principles were discussed at the Wartburg meeting, but the document was not published for several years for fear that it would increase the suspicion against the Burschenschaft, which had been occasioned by the festival.

all that has made Germany great and to promote German nationality.

"Freedom and equality is the highest for which we strive and for which every honorable German can never cease to strive. But there is no freedom and equality except in and through the law. Without law there is no freedom, but dominion, caprice, and despotism; without law there is no equality, but violence, subjection, and slavery. Laws must proceed from those, or be acceptable to those, who must live under them. Through the formation of the German Confederation the princes have recognized that every state is a part of Germany, and that as a part must be subservient to the whole. But they have also recognized that the law and freedom shall not vanish before their sovereignty. The 13th article of the Acts of Confederation contains the solemn promise that caprice shall not rule in any German state. At present the Germans have no greater duty than to speak the truth, and so loud that it shall reach the ears of their rulers. This is incumbent until the 13th article shall go into effect. Free speech shall not be denied. Therefore do we resolve:

"To be true to these principles and propagate them; to be true to science, especially to those sciences which concern the national life, such as ethics, politics, and history; to prevent the division of the nation into factions at the universities; to settle all differences without resorting to duels; to promote gymnastics because this makes men strong for the defense of the fatherland; to call no section but Germany alone our fatherland; to shun all that is foreign."

Follen had, of course, no part in the drafting of this memorial, but the principles involved were the same as those which were being instilled into the hearts and minds of the academic youth throughout Germany, due in large measure to his influence as leader of the Giessen movement; hence this brief allusion to the Wartburg meeting seems pertinent to the general discussion.

On the appointed day over four hundred students from twelve universities assembled on the market place in Eisenach and then formed a line of march to the Wartburg where, in

the great Rittersaal, the exercises were held. After singing "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott" one of the Jena Burschenschafter, who had won the iron-cross at Waterloo, made the main address, eulogizing the great deeds of Luther and Blücher, and exhorting his comrades through memory of the past to dedicate themselves to the holy cause of freedom and union. After the banquet, in which toasts were proposed in honor of Luther, the Grand Duke of Weimar, and the heroes of the war, the Burschen attended divine services in a body and then betook themselves in torchlight procession to the top of the Wartenberg where in a glare of bonfires the day closed with patriotic speeches and songs. Unfortunately, however, some of the more ardent spirits thought the occasion fitting for a demonstration, half serious, half farcical, against the reactionary tendency of the German governments. After the final proceedings several unpopular reactionary writings[1] were committed to the flames in imitation of Luther's burning of the papal bull. This was merely a harmless, juvenile escapade without premeditated malice, but the effect it produced upon the country was out of all proportion to its insignificance as we shall presently see. The second day was devoted to the discussion of the Burschenschaft organization. In these deliberations there arose again a sharp clash between the members of the Burschenschaften and Landsmannschaften, especially between the delegates of the two Giessen organizations. These differences were finally settled, all parties agreeing to the establishment of a general Burschenschaft.

Follen himself was unable to attend the festival, but with a few friends commemorated the event by partaking of the Lord's Supper, pledging themselves anew in this solemn way to a life of self-sacrificing devotion to the welfare of the country.

The Wartburg festival was the first great national demonstration against the weakness of the German Confederation and the first public expression of the necessity of a change in

[1] According to Wesselhöft, 16, and Leo, 102, the works themselves were not burned, but a number of old books provided by Massmann and his friends.

political affairs. It has become a famous historical episode not because of anything culpable in the enthusiastic boyish proceedings, but because of the effect that the spirit of the affair had upon the sovereigns of Europe. In some of the speeches it had indeed been declared that the rulers had not kept their promises to the people, but with the exception of the unfortunate act which marred the close of the first festal day the whole official program was carried out with dignity and moderation. On receipt of greatly exaggerated reports of what had occurred the Austrian and Prussian governments condemned the liberalism of the Grand Duke of Weimar and sent envoys to the "big Bursche," who after an investigation failed to find that the students had committed any grave offense. There was a current report that the Acts of Confederation of the German states were among the books supposed to have been burned, and in this Metternich saw a wide-spread conspiracy. The King of Prussia, too, became so alarmed that he ordered all clubs and associations in the Prussian universities to be dissolved and threatened to close these institutions rather than allow them to become centers of revolutionary intrigue.

In spite of this reactionary attitude the deliberations begun at the Wartburg were continued the following year in two conventions at Jena, resulting in the establishment of the "Allgemeine deutsche Burschenschaft." The purpose of this organization was, in a word, the unity, liberty, and equality of all German students as the first step to the unity of the German people, and the Christian German cultivation of every physical and spiritual power for the service of the fatherland. In tranquility, order, and respect for law student life began to show a marked improvement under the influence of this new order of things.[1] The picture of an ordinary Burschen meeting in Jena, as sketched by the Scotch traveler, John Russell,[2] shows a spirit which was typical of the Burschenschaft in all the other universities: "Every man, with his bonnet on his

[1] Rechtlieb Zeitgeist, *Demagogische Umtriebe,* II, 539.

[2] *A Tour in Germany,* I, 111.

head, a pot of beer in his hand, a pipe or segar in his mouth, and a song on his lips, never doubting but that he and his companions are training themselves to be regenerators of Europe, that they are the true representatives of the manliness and independence of the German character, and the only models of a free, generous, and high-minded youth. They lay their hands upon their jugs and vow the liberation of Germany; they stop a second pipe or light a second segar and swear that the Holy Alliance is an unclean thing."

The Burschenschaft not only served to restore and propagate the patriotic spirit, but became a symbol of the dignity and import of national life. This was an important step in raising the barriers of particularism, which had kept the Germans separated and had stood in the way of national development. Through the Burschenschaft the academic youth had before their eyes, on a small scale, the image of a larger national life; through it they began to take an interest in political problems and to prepare themselves thereby for the future political tasks of patriotic German citizens. Through this study they gained a larger conception of nationality and came to realize more fully that only by united action and consecration to common ideals could Teutonic civilization endure. Although the movement did not lead to any direct results the training which it had given in science and politics was not lost, for theoretically it had solved the problem. When these young patriots saw that national unity could not be attained at once they turned to the second part of their program, the establishment of constitutional freedom in the individual states as a means to the ultimate goal of their political ideal. Foremost in this movement for constitutional government was Karl Follen. The impressions which this struggle made upon the minds of these young men and the experience which it gave them remained with them for life; hence the Burschenschaft may be considered as a nursery in which were reared the leaders of the liberal movement of 1848, and in which was fostered the spirit that was absolutely necessary to make possible the establishment of the German Empire.

HIS REPUBLICANISM.

As a child Follen already displayed an intensely religious nature, a great reverence for the character of Christ, and a highly developed will to moral action. These characteristics not only account for his youthful Utopian scheme for the reformation of society, but form the psychological basis of his mature political views.

As already indicated, he had become interested in political questions prior to 1815, but not until after the Congress of Vienna did he enter the arena of political activity. This step was due in part to the failure of the German rulers to redeem their promise of constitutional government, and partly to the teachings of Gottlieb Welcker, whom the reactionary policy of the Metternich regime had driven into the ranks of the Republicans. As an instructor Welcker was very popular with the Giessen students, and at the request of the Blacks delivered a series of lectures on the great questions of the day during the winter of 1815-'16. His discussion of religion, morality, education, and public opinion were similar in their tendency to Fichte's Addresses and made a deep impression upon the members of Follen's circle.[1] He demanded constitutional government and declared that the social structure of Europe rested upon the estates, that the mystical idea of princely power was baneful in its effects, and that a neglect of duty on the part of the rulers would turn the nation toward republicanism.

That Follen was from this time growing dissatisfied with monarchic government and drifting rapidly toward republicanism is evident first of all by his effort to reorganize student life along democratic lines, upon the basis of freedom and equality. In his patriotic and revolutionary poetry, especially in the "Great Song," he brands the rulers as tyrants, traitors, and priests of Moloch, complains bitterly of the oppression of the people, and appeals to the latter to rise in their might against their oppressors and to organize a free-state. In his

[1] Haupt, 18.

political essays,[1] "Ueber die deutsche Inquisition" and "Ueber die revolutionäre Stimmung Deutschlands," he turns from his invective against individuals to the monarchic form of government itself as the evil to be opposed. He declares that the tyranny within is more odious than foreign domination, that instead of German unity there is only national dismemberment, instead of freedom only oppression and burdens, "suppression of intellectual freedom, embargoes on commerce, tolls, oppressive taxation, standing armies, high-handed justice, suppression of the freedom of the press, and capricious measures of all sorts." [2] He criticizes the Confederation because "without the cooperation of the people it put the supreme authority in the hands of an assembly of princely delegates, who are bound by the instructions of their governments, whereby the sovereigns of the several states as such are strengthened." [3] He objects to a government in which "the executive power assumes also the legislative and judicial functions,"[4] and denounces monarchism, "which like an evil worm is gnawing at every branch of political and civil life." [5] He further declares that "Germany has reached a state of civilization in which the history of the people is no longer identical with that of the governments; the decrees of the latter, even when made in opposition to public opinion, have no significance unless they are determined by it since real political self-activity exists only in the people." [6] And finally he states his position clearly when he says: "The different rulers have combined to uphold the monarchic principle and have thereby challenged all those who have hitherto sought a constitutional monarchy not to meet them half way, but to set principle over

[1] Written in 1819; extant in Wit's *Fragmente,* III, Sec. 1, 174-200.

[2] Wit's *Fragmente,* III, Sec. 1, 197.

[3] Ibid., 198.

[4] Ibid., 192.

[5] Ibid., 182.

[6] Ibid., 194.

against principle, that is, to substitute republicanism for monarchism." [1]

Follen's theories concerning the nature of the state were based upon the axiom of the French Revolution, that all men are free and equal. To the writings of Rousseau and especially of Fichte was due to a great extent his conversion to the principles of republican government. The main doctrines of these two writers concerning the nature of the civil state may, therefore, be briefly summed up as follows:

Rousseau,[2] it will be remembered believed that men enjoyed complete liberty and equality in the state of nature, which he considered as the golden age of mankind, and that the transition from the natural to the civil state was made by a social contract, entered into by individuals, who ceded their natural rights to a sovereign in return for certain civil rights. In the state of nature each individual was a sovereign in his own right, while the sovereignty resulting from the social contract is synonymous with the general will. Since sovereignty is, therefore, composed of the people as a whole it is absolute, inalienable, indivisible, and the source of all law. Rulers are merely agents without independent authority, chosen only to execute the general will.

In his early political writings [3] Fichte expressed the warmest enthusiasm for the French Revolution, admitting thereby his inclination toward republican principles. Rousseau accepts the original contracts as the basis of civil rights as a historical fact, while Fichte considers it merely as a theoretical foundation for civic association. According to Fichte's doctrine man has in the political state two kinds of rights, alienable and inalienable. The former have reference to modes of action which are permitted, but not enjoined, by the moral law. The most comprehensive of the latter is that of ethical

[1] Ibid., 199f.

[2] Cf. *Social Contract,* Bk. I, Chap. 6.

[3] These were two anonymous tracts: *Zurückforderung der Denkfreiheit von den Fürsten Europas* and *Beiträge zur Berichtigung der Urtheile des Publikums über die französische Revolution*—published in 1799. *Sämtliche Werke,* VI.

freedom, including the right to free expression of opinion and to free communication of thought, for without such freedom no spiritual development is possible. The right to develop toward perfection, toward moral freedom, is then according to Fichte the fundamental principle upon which the state is founded. In substance this is a statement of the Social Contract in terms of Kant's ethical system. As Fichte viewed it, the state is an instrument for protecting and regulating man's right to property and to the free development of his moral nature.

With the exception of Rousseau, who looked into the past for the golden age of mankind, the dominant belief of thinking men in the last half of the 18th century was an abiding faith in the possibility of unlimited human progress. Follen seems to have accepted both views: With Rousseau he saw a state of human perfection in the past, but regarded the age in which he lived as utterly bad, and with Fichte his highest aim was to realize an ideal state of man in the future. In the past he saw human perfection embodied in Christ and set up this ideal as a model for the future, maintaining with Fichte that civic organization is for no other purpose than to aid humanity to develop toward a perfect life. "On the battlefield of Leipzig," he writes,[1] "there awoke a spirit which strives and will strive until all is accomplished, till in the people the ideal of humanity is glorified." With Rousseau he maintains that men are born free and equal, with certain inalienable rights; with Fichte that the destiny of man is free development toward divine perfection. It is these general principles that lie at the foundation of his political ideas.

The theories which Follen formulated at this time concerning the civil state were in later years embodied in his lectures on moral philosophy,[2] and from this source his whole

[1] The Giessen Burschenschaft—*Works,* I, 30.

[2] *Works,* III, Chap. 14. In his *Politische Ideen des Karl Follen* Pregizer seems not to have used this source, but instead relies on the political essay in Wit's *Fragmente,* III, Sec. 1, 331-344, which he atributes to Follen. In *Fragmente,* III, Sec. 1, p. 207, Wit claims to be the author of this essay, which purports to be an exposition of the political creed of Follen's Blacks. The fact that some of the statements in the

course of reasoning can be traced more in detail. According to his views every human being possesses by nature personal rights, which constitute him the absolute master of his own faculties of body and mind; the right to property; and social rights, which entitle him to enter into all kinds of relations with his fellow men. Only through the free exercise of these rights, he maintains, and by a thorough system of education can mankind develop toward infinite perfection. In order to develop freely it is necessary for every individual to conduct himself in a manner conducive to his own welfare and to that of others. But who is to formulate correct rules of civic conduct? It is evident, Follen replies, that since there is no exterior standard of truth and right; since there is no certainty that one person's opinion is better than that of his neighbor, men must come to this conclusion whenever their opinions disagree as to what is right and what are the most effective means of carrying it out, that many eyes generally see better and many arms hold faster than two. Who then shall be the rulers? The wealthiest, the wisest and best, or those who decend from certain families? It is self-evident that wisdom and goodness cannot be bought, nor is it certain that they are inherited; and as to the wisest and best, the question remains undecided who they are. Consequently the only measure of right which remains is the majority of opinions, a fallible standard, it is true, but the highest to be obtained. The majority have, therefore, according to Follen, a natural right to establish and enforce their views as a law over all, chiefly for two reasons: In the first place, whenever there is no standard of truth that of probability must decide, and according to this principle that opinion of right which satisfies most minds must be presumed to be the most correct view obtainable at the time. In the second place, in order to make a minority rule over a majority the equality of rights must be violated by giving to certain individuals, singled out in some way or other, greater freedom than the rest, whereas every individual may at any

essay are identical with those in the lectures on moral philosophy shows plainly that it contains many of Follen's ideas even if it was not written by him.

time be in the majority without any special distinction. The main object of the state is then, according to Follen's view, the establishment of justice; and the principle means of realizing this purpose consists in a common legislation, by which the community declares what it considers the right rule of conduct, and a common administration, by which the decrees of the legislature are carried into effect. In the execution of these decrees force may be used only to compel the individual to do that which is necessary to the general welfare and to restrain him from doing that which is injurious to his fellow men.

It must not be supposed, Follen argues, that any one gives up his natural rights in becoming a member of the civil association, for if this were possible there is no one to whom he could resign them. He denies also the assertion of those who claim that the state itself, or the government, is a personality distinct from the individuals who are its subjects. Such personalities exist only in the imagination of certain priests of the law, who have peopled the civil world with a host of fabulous characters. What then is the state? It is an association of men, he replies, for no other purpose than to exercise their natural rights more fully and securely in common than each of them could do by himself; to unite their intellectual powers in order to ascertain that which is right, and their physical strength to carry this into effect. "A commonwealth, a republic," he explains, "is the only state worthy of man—not because it makes him better or happier, but because it is the most responsible condition of man in society and consequently most truly a moral state, in which every action, good or bad, must be ascribed to the whole people."[1]

Like Fichte Follen, too, believed that the second function of the state is the establishment of a thorough system of education to unfold and strengthen and refine the faculties of men;

[1] *Works,* III, 282. Follen seems to have in mind the ideal state described by Schiller in his Aesthetic Letters. According to Schiller the ideal state is the reflex of the united characters of its citizens; citizens whose characters are formed in accordance with the new ethical standards set up by Kant.

to aid them in the onward march toward perfection.[1] "Domestic and public education," he says, "are the two great elements which must operate in the development of man. Without domestic education man becomes a creature of the state, as in Sparta; whereas the state was made for man, and not man for the state. Without public education man hardly ever rises above the finite circle of knowledge and virtue, or the settled prejudices and selfish designs of his own family. He indeed loses his highest domestic privileges,—which is to think and feel and act as one of the great family of men." [2] The state has other important functions also, he adds, such as the promotion of religion, science, art, and commerce, but it should not engage in any of these pursuits.

From the foregoing it is evident that Follen was thoroughly imbued with the principles of democracy. The reactionary attitude of the German rulers caused him to repudiate monarchism completely and to demand a republican form of government based upon the principles of the freedom and equality of all. The main function of the state, as he conceives it, is to protect the liberty of all against the caprices of the individual, whereas in a monarchic form of society the will of the people is subservient to the caprice of the rulers.[3] This contradiction, he believed, not only justified but also demanded a revolution.

As indicated at the outset, Follen's republicanism was in a large measure due to his Christian faith, to his belief in human equality and in the dignity and immortality of the

[1] In his Addresses Fichte developed two general lines of thought: first, he discusses that element of German character which was to form the basis of the new national state; second, the means through which this was to be attained. In the original character, plasticity, and pictorial power of its language; in its philosophical and poetic bent of mind; in its religious depths and warmth; as well as in its pure unmixed blood the Teutonic race bears, according to his view, the stamp of genius; and in this free, original German spirit lies the possibility of a noble ethical life if it is left free to develop and is promoted by the new Pestalozzian system of education and by a union of all individuals in the service of one common end.

[2] *Works,* III, 291.

[3] Wit's *Fragmente,* III, Sec. 1, 207.

human soul. "If men believed in the immortality of their souls," he declares,[1] "there would be no slavery in this world, for all unjust pretensions and cruel distinctions among men, every proud elevation and servile humiliation, must fall before the acknowledged equality of immortal spirits." The life and teachings of Christ were his standard and guide in politics and government. These principles were with him a living reality; he never wavered from them nor neglected any opportunity to advocate and to promote them.

From his Addresses to the German Nation it is evident that Fichte desired national unity in a republican form of government;[2] but after all it was spiritual rather than political unity that seemed to him of the most value. Spiritual unity for moral development, he believed, would lead to perfect democracy, and the government best adapted to attain this end, whether republic or monarchy, should be adopted.[3] Like Fichte Follen, too, considered the state as an organization for realizing the moral end of humanity,—a state of society ruled by brotherly love and held together in Christian unity. Like Fichte Follen believed that the ideal was to be realized by the German people through the German state, and in this he was thoroughly patriotic; but his patriotism like that[4] of Fichte was strongly cosmopolitan, for like him he was an idealist and his thinking tended toward the universal. But unlike Fichte Follen demanded for the attainment of this end a political national unity under republican government and set himself to the task of realizing this demand. Fichte speaks of the disadvantages[5] of a politically divided Germany and admits also that the totality of German life is enriched by the provincial

[1] Follen's Sermons, *Works,* II, 6f.

[2] Cf. Ninth Address. In the Sixth Address Fichte states expressly that Germany is the only modern European nation that has proved itself worthy of realizing republican government.

[3] Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat,* 111f.

[4] Ibid., 92f.

[5] Cf. Ninth and Eleventh Addresses.

culture peculiar to each state,[1] but he demands only a national spirit rather than a national state. Follen on the other hand was convinced that the greatest hindrance to the progressive development of the Teutonic race was provincial patriotism and the spirit of particularism, and believed this obstacle could be removed only by the subversion of the various monarchic states and by uniting the people under one allegiance in a German republic.

As a preliminary step to this end the Follen brothers and their circle of political friends outlined during the winter of 1817-'18 a plan for a national constitution based upon republican principles; it consisted of 34 articles[2] and was in a general way modeled after that of the French republic. That the attainment of German unity is the object in view is evident from the first three articles, which read as follows:

"Germans are one people, that is, men of like mental and physical make-up; in addition to that, of similar language, historical traditions, and religious faith; to the Germans belong: the Swiss, Alsatians, Friesians, etc.

"In addition to this complete similarity of the Germans are subordinate social differences: specific physical and mental traits and developments, such as dialects, tribal history, etc. For the preservation and progressive development of these national characteristics the various branches of the race are closely united forever into one whole: the German Empire. For the preservation and development of these differences, which are nurtured merely as an aid to unity, the country shall be divided into imperial provinces.[3]

"The empire is to be a union of all Germans so that in it and through it the progressive development of humanity shall

[1] Cf. Ninth Address.

[2] Given in full by Jarcke, *Carl Ludwig Sand und sein an Kotzebue verübter Mord,* 88ff.

[3] Believing that a greater leveling should take place Follen introduced here a radical amendment: "After further deliberations the empire shall be divided into districts without any regard to racial lines; these shall be done away with and the divisions made according to population and natural boundaries in order to simplify the administration of the government."

be realized, for Germans see in their nation their human ideal, in their fatherland their whole world."

This new free-state which Follen hoped to establish was to be, according to this constitution, Christian in character; was to realize national unity and cultivate German individuality. All power was to be placed in the hands of the people, with equal suffrage and majority rule. The state was to be divided into districts containing approximately an equal number of people and named after mountains, rivers, and great national events. This was intended to promote a closer national unity than divisions on lines according to Prussians, Saxons, Hessians, etc. The capitol was to be located in the center of the state and called "Aller Deutschen." The legislature was to consist of representatives chosen from the several districts, and these officials were to choose from their number a chairman, who should receive no special rank, title, or salary. All government officials were to receive equal compensation and to hold office simply as representatives of the sovereign people. Especial emphasis was to be laid upon the regulation of religion and education. There was to be only one German church with no other confession of faith than the teachings of Christ. The schools were to give special attention to agriculture and vocational training.

HIS REVOLUTIONARY AIMS.

After the disbanding of the Giessen Burschenschaft in the summer of 1817 Follen's enthusiatic Teutonism developed rapidly into extreme political radicalism; and as the reactionary policy of the German rulers increased in severity after the Wartburg affair his cherished plans of political reform by peaceful, educational means seemed to be doomed, but with great tenacity of purpose he continued his propaganda on the athletic field and in private meetings, unfolding to his faithful Blacks his plans of action.

Believing that monarchic government not only was dwarfing the life of the individual but would also prevent the German nation from realizing its high destiny he proposed, there-

fore, to remedy this intolerable condition of German life by founding a Christian-German republic. With Rousseau he held that when a ruler usurps power to oppress the sovereign people the social contract is broken. This doctrine of popular sovereignty and of government by assent contained at once the condition and justification of a political revolution. Like Fichte he held that the state is founded upon the inherent right to moral development; but since the conditions necessary to this are constantly changing it follows that the original contract cannot be final, that constitutional forms must therefore be changed; hence the right to state reform, to revolution. His political writings abound in this doctrine, typical of which is the following statement attributed to him by Wit:[1] "The state commits treason when it acts contrary to its fundamental purpose, when it no longer protects the general freedom of all against the caprice of the monarch, but shirks its duties and assumes greater prerogatives. When this treason is committed against God and man then every individual takes a defensive attitude and a state of revolution exists."

Follen sought to justify the right to revolution not only from the standpoint of political science, but also on ethical grounds. "The purpose of human existence," says Fichte,[2] "is always to act freely according to reason," and in this Follen freely concurred both in theory and practice. He believed that everything which reason recognizes as good and beautiful and true may be realized by moral effort. Likewise in government: the state must be ordered according to the reason of its members; if it prevents its citizens from acting according to reason or conscience it must be overthrown.[3] The basis of Follen's system was, that everybody is in duty bound to convince himself through reason that he is right and then to follow his conviction without reference to the consequences to himself; he recognized no higher law than his own free

[1] *Fragmente,* III, Sec. 1, 173.

[2] "Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters," *Sämtliche Werke,* VII, 64.

[3] Wesselhöft, 70.

conviction. "If you are convinced," according to his argument,[1] "that your opinion is true you must seek to realize this truth; the means must not be considered when it is a question of a moral necessity. A moral necessity is not an aim, and the means to its attainment are of no import." The realization of freedom and equality through republican government was of course the object of Follen's propoganda; hence unconditional striving toward this object was the creed of his political circle.

From the foregoing Follen seems to have accepted the Jesuitical doctrine, that for the realization of a just end any means are justified even if they do run counter to accepted standards of morality. In the proceedings instituted against him later he stoutly denied that he held such doctrines, but this charge against him seems to have been sustained notwithstanding.[2] Concerning this question Wit[3] spoke as follows when he was still friendly to Follen: "We never directly avowed the principle, as the Prussian Minister, Bernstorf, accuses us in his circular letter, that the end sanctifies the means, but we were firmly convinced that if a Christian does anything in full conviction that he is acting for the welfare of the fatherland he is always in the right." Friedrich Münch observes[4] that as nearly as he can recollect Follen expressed himself thus: 'There are few men who under certain circumstances would not tell a fib, but on account of a certain awe, which is after all nothing but cowardice, refrain from bare-faced lying for a great principle. They would not hesitate to defend themselves against a highway robber by shooting him down, but they are afraid to draw the dagger against the great robbers and murderers of popular freedom. If men were only consistent all of us would have been free long ago.'

That Follen advocated political assassination as a means of subverting monarchic government cannot be denied. In incendiary pamphlets and songs current among the Giessen

[1] Ibid., 88.

[2] Cf. Pregizer, 67.

[3] *Fragmente,* III, Sec. 1, 172.

[4] "Aus Deutschlands trübster Zeit," *Gesammelte Schriften,* 59.

Blacks, and especially in the Great Song [1] written in part at least by Follen, this doctrine was expressed in such uncanny verses as the following:

> Freiheitsmesser gezückt!
> Hurrah! den Dolch durch die Kehle gedrückt!
> Mit Purpurgewändern,
> Mit Kronen und Bändern
> Zum Rachealtar steht das Opfer geschmückt!

'It is cowardly,' he declared, to quote again from Münch's dim recollection,[2] 'to speak of obtaining liberty through legitimate means, because nobody has the right to keep liberty from us; we must gain it through every means offered to us. The tyrants know how to protect themselves against legal acts, therefore they must learn to tremble before our daggers. Whoever resorts to these measures in the full conviction that he is sacrificing all that is dear to him for the welfare of the fatherland is morally all the nobler the harder he finds it to overcome his natural aversion to such deeds.' When he was asked by Wesselhöft [3] whether he thought he could put his system into practice without the shedding of blood and whether his feelings did not revolt against the destruction of men, who were probably good and just, merely because they ventured to think differently from him, he replied calmly: "No. If matters come to the worst all who are wavering in their opinions must be sacrificed; this is not a matter of feeling, but of necessity."

Follen's extreme political radicalism was only the result of his ardent patriotism developed to the point of fanaticism. So deeply concerned was he for the welfare of the nation that he advocated the employment of force for the attainment of political conditions that would foster and develop the genius

[1] Given in full in Wit's *Fragmente,* I, 430-448; extant also in Follen's *Works,* I, 585-593, but with some of the more radical passages omitted.

[2] *Gesammelte Schriften,* 49.

[3] *Teutsche Jugend,* 88.

of the Teutonic race. According to Fichte[1] mankind must be forcibly constrained to follow the upward path toward moral perfection; but since force employed in its own interests is tyranny it is the first duty of a ruling prince to educate the people toward freedom. In answer to the question whether the German rulers will do this, he replies that they are still too narrow to give up their own personal interests, and too selfish to sacrifice themselves to the larger ideals of Teutonic civilization, hence there should be one powerful leader to forcibly unite the German nation for the development of its great latent possibilities. When one considers then that even Fichte advocated a "Zwingherr zur Deutschheit" it is evident that he and Follen had in mind the same means to the same end, but differed only in their method of procedure.

Fully convinced that the abolition of tyranny was a moral necessity Follen used all of his eloquence and persuasion to convert his friends to his belief. He was a powerful athlete, a keen, logical thinker, and an impassioned speaker. Along with his love of liberty and his deep religious mysticism he possessed a highly developed self-confidence and an indomitable will, which could brook no opposition. Through these qualities of body and mind he completely dominated the hearts and minds of his companions, exerting upon them an almost irresistable influence. Those who listened to his arguments felt as if they were standing on the brink of a bottomless abyss and were ordered to plunge into its depth. Wesselhöft[2] observes that he exercised over his followers a control that was very galling to many of them, that the superiority of his mind and acquirements deterred even the strongest from adopting any independent choice of opinion or of following any original course of action, and that he possessed so great an acuteness and strength of intellect that few of his friends could detect the fantastic foundations of his youthful philosophy. Although it seemed impossible to evade his logic some of the Blacks, nevertheless, revolted against his maxim that tyranni-

[1] Cf. "Entwurf zu einer politischen Schrift, im Frühling 1813"—*Sämtliche Werke,* VII, 564f.

[2] *Teutsche Jugend,* 80.

cide is permissible in the service of freedom. In opposition to these "Moderates," as they were called, Follen arrayed his most devoted adherents under the name of the "Unconditionals," who adopted as their slogan, to quote Münch[1] again, the original ending of the so-called Great Song:

> Nieder mit Kronen, Thronen, Frohnen, Drohnen und Baronen!
> Sturm!

In order to organize his propaganda more thoroughly,[2] Follen planned a solemn Lord's Supper, at which the Unconditionals were to be united in an indissoluable covenant of "death brethren," consecrated to the holy cause of freedom. Owing to the alertness of the university authorities this project had to be abandoned, but its purpose was attained by a wide circulation of the revolutionary Great Song. It must not be supposed, however, that these incendiary songs and speeches were heard in public, but rather in the privacy of student lodgings and even in the depth of the forest under cover of darkness.

In the spring of 1818 Follen graduated from the university of Giessen as Doctor of both Civil and Canonical Law. He then began to lecture on jurisprudence in his alma mater and to practice law in the court over which his father presided as judge. In the midst of these labors he not only busied himself with his political propaganda, but found time also for the study of philosophy, especially the writings of Spinoza, the English Deists, and the French Encyclopædists, from which he emerged with his religious and philosophical views clarified and to some extent formulated into a definite system.

As a preliminary step to his ultimate aim he had planned as early as 1817 a campaign for the introduction of constitutional government into the several German states and he now set the movement on foot in his own land by drafting the first of that flood of petitions which afterwards induced the Hessian government to grant, at least in appearance, a representative constitution.[3] Through the notoriety thus gained and

[1] *Gesammelte Schriften,* 51.

[2] Ibid., 54.

[3] Haupt, 115f.

through his reputation as a skillful lawyer he was called upon to conduct the cause of the municipalities of Hesse against an arbitrary attempt of the ducal government to deprive them of their last remnant of political liberty.[1] For the sake of personal gain some of the counselors of the Grand Duke had prevailed upon the latter to establish a commission to administer the finances of the several communities. Seeing in this the destruction of their credit and independence, the latter united in sending to the government their earnest remonstrances, but this union was at once declared seditious and any lawyer who should dare to aid them was threatened with the loss of his office. Undaunted by this threat Follen responded to the appeal for aid and drew up a memorial setting forth the injustice of the decree both in regard to general principles and to the law of the land. This was presented directly to the Grand Duke before the commission could take preventive measures, and public opinion was so strong against the flagrant injustice of the decree that it was rescinded and the members of the commission removed from office. His successful prosecution of this just cause and his active participation in the growing movement for constitutional government laid the foundation of his ultimate ruin in his native land. Denounced by his enemies as a dangerous political agitator, he was from that time on the object of unrelenting persecution.

With little hope for a successful career at Giessen under the existing political conditions, Follen severed his connection with the university, and upon invitation of Professor Fries went to Jena in October, 1818, where he began a course of lectures on Roman law. From this more favorable location where his republican doctrine had already[2] gained a footing through the efforts of his friend, von Buri, he hoped to extend his influence to Berlin as a means of winning recruits for his propaganda. It seems that he and his brother had in mind about this time the fantastic idea[3] of calling a great mass-

[1] *Works,* I, 60ff.; Wit, III, Sec. 1, 169.

[2] Haupt, 126.

[3] Münch, 17; Braun, *Westermann's Monatshefte,* XXXV, 260.

meeting on the battle-field of Leipzig to proclaim the republic. The people were to be armed for the abolition of royalty, and then a parliament was to be convened to adopt the constitution which he and his Blacks had already drafted for the new government, but no attempt was made to carry out this scheme. From the outset he made a favorable impression upon the Jena students and his success as a teacher soon won him admission to the highest circles of society. Robert Wesselhöft, who was at that time considered as one of the leaders of the Jena Burschenschaft, describes his first meeting with Follen as follows:[1]

"He received us like old friends, with the simple familiar 'du.' He was candid, kind, and confiding, but there was in his whole appearance and bearing, in the tone of his voice, in his gestures and glances, something so noble, such calmness and strength, such determination and almost proud earnestness,—a something peculiar to himself, which imperceptibly inspired all who came in contact with him with a deep feeling of respect. He had a broad but delicately formed forehead; a well-shaped nose; deep, soulful eyes; a red, medium-sized mouth; a fair, rosy complexion; heavy, light-colored whiskers; and smooth, blonde hair, which was parted in the middle of his forehead and hung around his neck in wavy locks. Picture this head on a sound, powerful, well-formed body of middle stature, and clothe the figure in a blue German student's coat trimmed with pearl buttons, and you will have before you the image of Karl Follen. I can assure you that we have nowhere met his equal nor anybody who could be compared with him for purity and chastity of manners and morals. He seemed to concentrate all his energies upon one great aim,—the revolution. The death of the enemy and the freedom of the human mind not only lay at his heart, and his heart on his tongue, but his powerful fist might be seen convulsively clenched whenever he heard the clank of fetters and chains."

Finding the Jena Burschenschaft too tame and philistine to suit his high ideals, Follen united a few of the more radically

[1] *Teutsche Jugend,* 65.

inclined into a club[1] for discussing the practical working of his philosophical and political ideas. Especially was the question debated, as Follen himself notes,[2] whether an outer code of morals is necessary, or whether man's most inner conviction alone can justify and condemn him before God; further, whether there are rights which one can claim under all circumstances and never renounce. Follen sought to win his new friends over to his doctrine of conviction, unconditionality, and republicanism, as he had done in Giessen, but although they seemed to yield to his bold conceptions they could not so readily adopt them. Under the guidance of the most learned and broad-minded men in all the different professions the Jena students had acquired the habit of strict criticism and independent philosophical thought. Although they cherished the deepest respect for Follen's sincerity and self-conviction, as Wesselhöft records,[3] they felt that he was wrong and sought to convert him through the aid of Fries, their professor of philosophy. To effect this the whole club gathered weekly around the latter and discussed the subject warmly.[4] Fries and Follen each had his own system and neither could convert the other, but their adherents gained much valuable knowledge and arrived at decided opinions of their own. The question of conviction and the manner of making it of practical value in life was often discussed. Fries made a distinction between conviction arrived at from the conscience and that arrived at from scientific study, that is, the conviction of the masses cannot be taken as a guide unless supported by the conclusions of scholars; further, that conviction must not lead to action by unlawful, violent deeds. This was of course directly opposed to Follen's democratic conception of popular conviction and to his doctrine of unconditionality. Since Fries was prevented after a short time from attending the meetings the club was

[1] Leo, 176.

[2] "Ueber die deutsche Inquisition"—Wit's *Fragmente,* III, Sec. 1, 187.

[3] *Teutsche Jugend,* 87ff.

[4] *Works,* I, 186; Leo, 187; Pregizer, 64.

left alone under Follen's influence, but when the latter tried to force his views upon all, maintaining that cowardice and weakness alone prevented their adoption and application as the rule of life, a decisive rupture took place. The club suddenly broke up in March, 1819, leaving Follen with a few followers. He saw that much labor was yet necessary on his part to raise even the most cultivated and susceptible youth to his high ideals, and realized, doubtless, that his object could be more easily attained by gradually habituating others to his views than by violently opposing himself to the spirit then prevalent in Jena. An event occurred, however, which not only completed the ruin of his prospects, but served to stifle the liberal aspirations of the German youth as well.

On March 23rd, 1819, the reactionary writer, Kotzebue, whom the liberals suspected of being a spy in the service of the Russian government, was assassinated by Karl Sand, one of Follen's intimate friends at Jena; and on the 1st of July a murderous assault was made upon the Hessian minister of state, von Ibell, by Karl Löhning, an associate of some of the Giessen Blacks. To the Holy Alliance these atrocious deeds seemed to be a manifestation of the same spirit that had inaugurated the Wartburg meeting, and the Burschenschaft a revival of the ancient "Vehmgericht," with the ultimate object of overthrowing all monarchic institutions. The freedom of the press was now abolished; the formation of societies among students prohibited; the universities placed under immediate government control; a strict police system established; and scores of young men suspected of even the mildest liberal views were arrested and thrown into prison. Follen himself was twice arrested as an accomplice to Sand, but was fully acquitted of the charge.

HIS REVOLUTIONARY POETRY.

The members of Follen's circle gave expression to their republican ideals not only in political tracts, but also in songs and poems, the most radical of which was the anonymous Great Song, a joint product of the Follen brothers. A num-

ber of these revolutionary songs together with poems by such writers as Körner, Arndt, Uhland, and Schenkendorf were collected under the title of "Freye Stimmen frischer Jugend,"[1] one of the most pleasing and important documents of the Burschenschaft movement. The selection may be grouped under five heads: Turnlieder, Freiheitslieder, Reichskleinode, Kriegsgesänge, and Heldenlieder, all of which are variations of the same general theme,—love of liberty and fatherland. As a patriotic appeal to revolution for the attainment of civic freedom and national unity, the Burschenschaft songs supplement in a measure the patriotic lyrics of Körner and Arndt, who summon the nation to unite against foreign oppression. The collection is introduced by Follen's soul-stirring dedicatory poem, "Turnstaat," which is not only one of the gems of German political poetry, but strikes the keynote of the whole revolutionary program,—freedom, unity, equality, through the overthrow of monarchism and the establishment of a Christian-German Republic:

Schalle, du Freiheitssang! Walle wie Wogendrang
Aus Felsenbrust!
Feig bebt der Knechte Schwarm; uns schlägt das Herz so warm,
Uns zuckt der Jünglingsarm voll Tatenlust.

Gott Vater! Dir zu Ruhm flammt deutsches Rittertum
In uns aufs neu;
Neu wird das alte Band, wachsend wie Feuerbrand:
Gott, Freiheit, Vaterland, altteutsche Treu.

Einfach und gläubig sei, kräftig und keusch and frei,
Hermanns Geschlecht!
Zwingherrnmacht, Knechtewitz malmt Gottes Racheblitz:
Euch sei der Königsitz; Freiheit und Recht!

Freiheit! in uns erwacht ist deine Geistesmacht,
Dein Reich genaht:
Glühend nach Wissenschaft, blühend in Ritterkraft
Sei, teutsche Turnerschaft, ein Bruderstaat.

[1] Copies of this little volume are so rare that passages from some of the representative songs will be quoted here.

Sause, du Freiheitssang, brause wie Donnerklang
Aus Wolkenbrust!
Ein Herz, ein Leben ganz stehen wir, ein Sternenkranz
Um einer Sonne Glanz, voll Himmelslust.

Allusion has already been made to the great rôle which the gymnastic movement played in the Burschenschaft and to the high esteem in which its founder was held by Follen and his circle. Just as gymnastics had under Jahn's direction become a powerful means of preparing the nation for the great struggle against Napoleon, it now became in the hands of the liberals an integral part of their national and revolutionary propaganda. Believing that greater tasks were yet to be accomplished the gymnasts formulated their program in verses such as the following, in which they sing with joyous enthusiasm of the revival of ancient knighthood and of the new crusade against injustice and tyranny:

Wir ziehen zum fröhlichen Werke, hinaus auf die grüne Heid';
Erturnen Kraft und Stärke zu manchem kühnen Streit,
Mit Schwertern und mit Lanzen erproben wir den Arm:
Und unser rasches Tanzen macht Mut und Blut so warm.

Wir wollen wieder schaffen die gute alte Art:
Den kühnen Mut der Waffen mit frommem Sinn gepaart;
Wir wollen wie die Ritter, mit blankem Männerschwerd
Im Sturm und Schlachtgewitter verfechten Hof und Herd.[1]

Das Vaterland vor Ketten zu schirmen für und für,
Und, ist's umgarnt, zu retten; nur darum sterben wir.
Seht! Düstere Nebel trüben noch Teutschlands Morgenrot;
Das Vaterland, ihr Lieben, bedarf noch manchen Tod.

Wir wollen uns vorbereiten zu Opfern fromm und treu,
Dass riesengrossen Zeiten das Herz gewachsen sei.
Drum sind wir hier beisammen, drum ist uns hier so warm;
Wir schüren Geistesflammen, wir stählen unsern Arm.[2]

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[1] *Freye Stimmen,* No. 2 (by Ch. Sartorius).

[2] Ibid., No. 3 (anonymous).

Wir mühen uns nicht um goldnen Tand, Herrschtum und Sklavenehre:
Wir ringen, dass ins Vaterland die stolze Freiheit kehre.
So hegen wir ein freies Reich: an Rang und Stand sind alle gleich;
Freies Reich! Alle gleich! Heisa juchei! [1]

Follen himself begins with a short panegyric on old "Turnvater" Jahn and then summons the gymnastic youth to draw the sword against all enemies whatsoever of the sovereign people:

Als der Turnmeister, der alte Jahn
Für des Volkes urheilige Rechte
Vortrat zu der Freiheit Rennlaufbahn:
Da folgt' ihm ein wehrlich Geschlechte.
Hei! wie schwungen sich die Jungen, frisch, froh, fromm, frei!
Hei! wie sungen da die Jungen: juchei.
Ueberall nah, überall da,
Sind deine Feinde, Volksgemeinde!
Teutsche Gemeinde, dein Hermann ist da!
Da, hurrah!
Schwerter geschwungen! die Freiheit gerungen!
Juchei, ihr Alten und Jungen.[2]

Auf, Jubeldonner und Liedersturm!
Der Begeisterung Blitz hat gezündet;
Der Mannheit Eiche, der Teutschheit Turm
Ist in Teutschland wieder gezündet:
Der Freiheit Wiege, dein Sarg, Drängerei!
Wird gezimmert aus dem Baum der Turnerei.

Auf, du Turner! Du Teutscher wohlan!
Auf, ehrliche, wehrliche Jugend!
Noch ficht mit der Wahrheit gekrönter Wahn,
Noch kämpft mit dem Teufel die Tugend.
Schwertstahl aus dem Rost! aus dem Schlauch, junger Most!
Durch die Dunstluft, Nordost! grüner Mai, aus dem Frost! [3]

[1] Ibid., No. 13 (by Karl Hoffmann).

[2] Ibid., No. 15 (by Follen brothers).

[3] Ibid., No. 14 (by Karl Follen).

Among the Freiheitslieder is Follen's famous "Bundeslied auf dem Rütli,"[1] which is a direct challenge to the tyrants, a call to revolution, and the prophecy of a brighter day in the political life of the nation. The following strophes will serve to indicate the general tone and spirit of the whole:

Ja, bei Gott und Vaterland! verderben
Woll'n wir der Gewaltherrn letzte Spur:
Gern für Recht und Freiheit sterben, bleibt für Volk die Freiheit nur!
Gott, hör' unsern Bundesschwur! Hör' an! hör' an! hör' an!

Steig' aus uns'res Blutes Morgenglanze
Glüh'nde Volkssonn' in alter Pracht!
In des Reiches Sternenkranze steig aus uns'res Todes Nacht,
Freistaat Volkes, Gottesmacht! Empor! empor! empor!

Freiheitsbund, vortrage deinem Volke,
Deiner Zeit das Freiheitsbanner kühn!
Aus dir, freie Donnerwolke, soll das Siegkreuz Gottes glüh'n,
Soll ein neues Reich erblüh'n! Hinan! hinan! hinan!

The celebrated Great Song embodies the whole creed of the radicals: the subversion of monarchic government, the establishment of the Christian Republic, and a martyr's death if necessary for the attainment of this end. Its ardent love of liberty, its glowing patriotism, its praise of popular sovereignty, and especially its fierce invective against the despotic rulers, which ring out from beginning to end, are the final and most powerful summons to political revolution. The poem is both lyric and epic in character and is composed of a number of single songs joined together into a unified whole by their passionate revolutionary sentiment. It seems quite probable that the lyric poetry which is contained in Klopstock's patriotic dramas, "Hermann und die Fürsten" and "Hermanns Tod," and which shows great similarity in composition to the Great Song, furnished the model for this poem. In sublime images taken from the Voluspa of the older Edda the song opens with

[1] Ibid., No. 21.

a grand overture, which portrays the conflagration of the world and the birth of freedom:

Horcht auf, ihr Fürsten! Du, Volk, horch auf!
Freiheit und Rache in vollem Lauf,
Gottes Wetter ziehen blutig herauf!
    Auf, dass in Weltbrands Stunden
    Ihr nicht müssig werdet gefunden!
Reiss' aus dem Schlummer dich, träges Gewürme,
Am Himmel schau auf, in Gewitterpracht
Hell aufgegagngen dein Todesgestirne!
            Es erwacht,
            Es erwacht,
Tief aus der sonnenschwangeren Nacht,
In blutflammender Morgenwonne,
            Der Sonnen Sonne,
            Die Volkesmacht!
Spruch des Herrn, du bist gesprochen,
Volksblut, Freiheitsblut, du wirst gerochen,
Götzendämm'rung, du bist angebrochen.

After this prelude the revolutionary procession passes in review singing in solos and choruses the various parts of the Great Song. As the representative of the older generation of patriots, who had resigned themselves in hopeless despair to the gloomy political outlook of the country, appears an aged man chanting a solemn dirge over the death of freedom, but his mournful strains are soon lost amid the din of a stirring war song as the sturdy German youth come marching along:

            Doch es sungen
            Die Jungen
Frisch, fröhlich und frei,
Die mutigen Söhne der Turnerei;
Sternaugen funkeln, Schwerter sind bloss,
Laut schallet der Freiheit Trompetenstoss!
            Schmettr' heraus
            Aus der Brust
            Jugendbraus,
            Schwertgesaus,
            Freiheitslust!

At the close of the song the leader of this youthful band addresses himself directly to the spectators, appealing to them to arise in their might and join in the movement for liberty:

Der Völker Volk liegt nieder in Angst und Schweiss,
Seinen Hunger nährend in stummem Fleiss.
Du armes Volk, Dir ist so heiss,
Du bist so elend, so herzenskrank,
Beut keiner Dir einen Labetrank?

Menschenmenge, grosse Menschenwüste,[1]
Die umsonst der Geistesfrühling grüsste,
Reisse, krache endlich, altes Eis!
Stürz' in starken stolzen Meeresstrudeln
Hin auf Knecht und Zwingherrn, die Dich hudeln,
Sei ein Volk, ein Freistaat, werde heiss!

After the passionate harangue of this revolutionary leader the people are wrought up to such a pitch of excitement that they answer in one loud acclaim:

Brüder, so kann's nicht gehn,[2]
Lasst uns zusammen stehn,
Duldet's nicht mehr!
Freiheit, dein Baum fault ab,
Jeder am Bettelstab,
Beisst bald ins Hungergrab;
Volk ins Gewehr!

[1] According to Wit *(Fragmente,* I, 59f.) that part of the song beginning with this strophe had come into the possession of some of the Jena students in the summer of 1818; somebody secretly printed 6,000 copies and scattered them broadcast over the country under the title "Dreissig oder drei und dreissig, gleich viel," meaning that they could put their 33 rulers out of the way as easily as the Greeks got rid of their 30 tyrants.

[2] This portion of the song was widely disseminated in the Odenwald and had a great influence on the peasant uprising of that region in 1819. It afterward became known as the Odenwälder Bauernlied; cf. Haupt, 133f.

Brüder in Gold und Seid',
Brüder in Bauernkleid,
Reicht Euch die Hand!
Allen ruft Deutschlands Not,
Allen des Herrn Gebot,
Schlagt Eure Plager tot,
Rettet das Land!

Dann wird's, dann bleibt's nur gut,
Wenn Du an Gut und Blut
Wagst Blut und Gut;
Wenn Du Gewehr und Axt,
Schlachtbeil und Sense packst,
Zwingherrn den Kopf abhackst,
Brenn', alte Wut!

And now the spirit of revolt is abroad in the land. In order to begin the work of organization the youthful revolutionists first join in one indissoluble bond of death-brethren and betake themselves to the depth of the forest where, at the pensive hour of midnight, they kneel in prayer and then partake of the Lord's Supper, consecrating themselves in this solemn manner to the holy cause of freedom:

Es zieht eine Schaar von Männern sich
Herab zum dunkeln Haine,
Beim dämmernden Fackelscheine.

Und dort, wo die Tannen und Eichen im Rund'
Zum erhabenen Dome sich türmen,
Gottes Orgel brauset im Stürmen,
Wie ein Altar aufsteiget der Felsengrund,
Dort trat man zusammen zu Mitternachtstund'.

Und die Todbrüder treten zum Altar hin,
Zu empfahn in heiliger Entflammung,
Was uns Heil bringt oder Verdammung.
Mit dem König der Märt'rer ein Blut und ein Sinn,
So nehmen die Märtyrerweihe sie hin,
Und weih'n sich der ew'gen Erbarmung
Mit Opfergesang und Umarmung.

At the close of this solemn ceremony the death-brethren unite in singing a communion hymn, which is characterized by a deep religious mysticism combined with a spirit of the sternest political fanaticism. The revolutionists were first and above all zealous Christians. They considered Christ, however, not so much a divine mediator, but rather the highest type of manhood, the ideal Republican, and it was his loving self-sacrifice for the cause of humanity, his loyalty to a conviction for which he boldly and joyously faced death, that appealed to them so powerfully:

O Jesu, Liebster mein!
In Fleisch und Blut und Leben,
Im höchsten Geistesstreben
Bin ich nur ewig dein.

Dir bist du, Mensch, entflohen,
Ein Christus sollst du werden,
Wie du ein Kind der Erden,
War auch des Menschen Sohn.

From the spirit of Christian love proceeds their love of fatherland. All aglow with Christian patriotic zeal the death-brethren, again seized by the revolutionary spirit, vow to become martyrs for the sake of freedom and implore divine aid for their solemn task. Then in the "Chorus of free Christians" rings out loud and clear the final call to arms that is to set the revolutionary forces in motion.

Ihr, die mit mir zugleich
Den Glaubenstrank genossen,
Der Tugend Bund geschlossen
Für Kreuz und Schwert und Eich',
Ein Herz, Ein Arm, Ein Blut sind wir geworden
Der ew'gen Freiheit heil'ger Märt'rerorden.

Der Du am Brandaltar
Elias Ruf erhörtest,
Baals Thron und Frohn zerstörtest,
Zu Dir fleht uns're Schaar.

Ihr Geister der Freien und Frommen,
Wir kommen, wir kommen, wir kommen,
Eine Menschheit zu retten aus Knechtschaft und Wahn,
Zur Blutbühn' zum Rabenstein führt uns're Bahn.

Fort Zwingherrn-, Adel- und Pfaffenbrut,
Soldaten und Pöbel zur Höllenglut!
Ein Reich freier Bürger,
Ein Gott, ein Volk, ein Wille soll sein,
Doch die Menschheit im Volke nur schafft den Verein.

Hurrah! Deutschlands Sterne flammen,
Deutschland krönt Ein Heil'genglanz!
Herzen, Hände schlagt zusammen,
Zwingherrschaft fahr' in die Flammen,
Freiheit aus der Flammen Kranz.

Zu den Waffen! stürme, türme
Berg auf Berg von Knecht und Herrn!
Riesin Deutschland, brich die Klammer,
Alter Freiheit Donnerhammer
Wettre, schmettre nah und fern!

Deutscher Hiebe Kraft zerstiebe
Schlangengift und Tigerwut,
Schwerterblau wird Morgenröte,
Schwerterblitz fahr' aus und tödte
Dich im Meere, Zwingherrnbrut!

How this incipient revolution was nipped in the bud by the monarchic powers has already been alluded to. When Follen became convinced that the times were not ripe for his republican program he sought consolation for his overwhelming disappointment by eulogizing in one last solemn hymn[1] the great German patriots of the past. The first strophe, sung in chorus by the revolutionary party, indicates the theme and the general tone of the whole poem:

Lasst die toten Brüder leben!
Brecht den Schmerz der Gegenwart,
Lasst uns Preis den Teuren geben,
So im Volksdienst ausgeharrt!
Einen soll uns jeder sagen,
Der ihm füllt die treue Brust;
Manch ein Herz hat euch geschlagen:
Volkesschmerz und Freiheitslust.

[1] *Freye Stimmen,* No. 56 (by Follen brothers).

Accordingly this introductory chorus is followed by a number of solos, the first of which recalls the memorable deeds of Hermann in the Teutoburger Forest. Then we are introduced to the heroes of the great mediæval epics; to such heroic characters as Karl the Hammer, the great emperors, Heinrich, Otto, and Rudolph, to the famous knights of chivalry and the crusades, and to the patriots Tell and Winkelried, men who made the world ring with the renown of their mighty deeds. After these praises of the middle ages comes a panegyric on Luther and the Reformation, followed by eulogies on the poets and heroes of the wars of liberation. After recalling to memory Germany's glorious past, the individual singers all join again in chorus in a lament over the desolate present and the hopeless outlook for the future of the fatherland:

> Ja, es stieg manch' helle Sonne, Vaterland, aus deinem Schoos,
> Träumtest hohe Mutterwonne, und nun wächst du freudenlos —
> Was dies letzte Glas bedeute, sag' es, treu Germanenherz!
> Klingt!—es klingt wie Grabgeläute—:
> Unsrer Sehnsucht tiefer Schmerz.

It would be time lost to enter into a discussion of these revolutionary songs for the purpose of pointing out their literary defects or merits. Although some of them do strike the true poetic note, it may as well be confessed at the outset that a great deal of this lyric effusion, especially the Great Song, is for the most part mere rhetorical pathos showing an uncontrolled imagination spurred on by animal vitality, which makes much of it bizarre and some of it even repulsive. Admitting then the crudeness of these songs as literature, one must seek elsewhere than in the field of æsthetics for their importance, if they possess any at all.

At the beginning of the 19th century German literature had very little connection with the actual, contemporary life of the nation, but drew its inspiration from the German past and concerned itself mostly with æsthetic questions. It became the task of the younger generation, therefore, to arouse the nation from its one-sided literary culture to a sense of the

importance of public affairs; hence the poets of the wars of liberation and their successors performed the important service of bringing poetry and reality, literature and life, art and politics into contact and mutual relation. Writers began now to descend into the turmoil and passions of the actual world, entering into the feelings and desires, the hopes and longings of the people. As the times gradually became predominantly political, poetry as a result entered the service of politics and the practical development of modern life; as a mirror of political conditions it became a critique of the national life and hence a part of the national existence. It mattered not so much what the poet wrote as to what party he belonged,—how he asserted and developed his moral character in practical affairs. Unlike the Classicists and Romanticists the poet's personality now became more prized than his literary productions; hence the political poetry of the early decades of the century had as its chief task to evaluate moral motives, becoming thereby influential as a moral force for the guidance of the nation to a higher standard of life. What the national literature of Germany was lacking in its best productions was to be gained not from abstract theory, but from reality; not from books, but from deeds; hence political literature served to point the way from the past to the future. Herein lay whatever value there was in the poetry of Follen's circle.

The political poets of the wars of liberation embodied in verse the patriotic sentiment, becoming thus a great moral force in the national uprising against Napoleon. The poets of the Burschenschaft movement went still farther, seeking not only to inspire love of fatherland, but demanding civic freedom and national unity; hurling defiance at the old regime on the one hand and aiming at national reconstruction on the other. They comprehended the task of the age, presenting in their poetry the great principles of popular life, such as freedom, nationality, and self-rule, thus not only voicing the sentiment and convictions of the people, but becoming also the prophets of the political revolts of later years. These young enthusiasts, bound by no considerations, gave themselves up unreservedly to the spirit of the times. Their cry

for freedom was the cry of the nation, of humanity. Their enthusiasm for nationality and their wrath against despotism, along with their joyous rush into revolution,—revolution for the emancipation of the people, gave to their songs a new element in German political poetry, making them thereby the forerunners of the political writers of the '30s and '40s, such as Freiligrath and Herwegh.

In the passion of their storm and stress the members of Follen's circle were political in their hearts rather than in their heads. Most of the political wisdom of their poetry was contained in a few catch-words which served to arouse patriotic sentiment, but which was not sufficient to solve practical political problems. Although it was juvenile and immature it served to keep alive the patriotic sentiment, not so much among the masses, however, as among the academic youth, who, trained in this early school of patriotic, revolutionary sentiment, were to become the future political leaders. The Burschenschaft poetry was then, in a word, prophetic. Its aims lay in the future; its important function was tentatively to point out with great emphasis the distant goal to be gained. Passionate and bombastic it had to be to make any impression. The way had to be prepared, and if some of the utterances of these juvenile revolutionists were too radical they were nevertheless of value in preparing the soil for the great harvest that was to follow—the unification of Germany on a democratic basis.

In regard to the Great Song still one word more seems necessary: When carefully considered, without prejudice, Follen's virulent attack upon the tyrants seems too verbose to be criminal or even dangerous. It is always easier to condemn than to seek to understand. The language of this song cannot be correctly interpreted by those who have not sometime in their life been moved by a passionate longing for freedom, or whose hearts have not been powerfully touched by the sight of gross injustice and tyranny. Follen was only a youth of twenty-two years, an ardent patriot who was not only filled with righteous indignation against the tyranny of his own times, but who sympathized with the martyrs of liberty in all ages. Earnest, courageous, yet inexperienced, he longed to

seize the avenging sword and with one blow destroy the firmly established and ancient institution of absolute monarchism, but in his impetuosity and impatience with the slow means of redress he neither weighed his words nor counted the cost of acts to which he felt prompted only by the most generous impulses. Judging him from this viewpoint with the knowledge, too, that he possessed the most noble and tender heart, one ought, it seems, to interpret the defying tones and the vehement indignation of the Great Song as nothing more than the natural utterances of intense all-sacrificing devotion to the rights, dignity, and happiness of mankind.

THE ASSASSINATION OF KOTZEBUE.

The crushing effect which the assassination of Kotzebue by Karl Sand had upon the patriotic hopes and aspirations of Follen and his circle has already been indicated in the discussion of his revolutionary propaganda. Was Follen implicated, either directly or indirectly, in the assassination of Kotzebue? This question has been frequently discussed, and answered in various ways. In all probability no new evidence will ever be forthcoming to throw new light upon this mystery; hence the present discussion must of necessity be of a purely analytical nature. It presents a resumé of the various arguments thus far advanced in the case, and aims at a solution both from a historical and a psychological point of view.

When Sand was still a mere child he displayed extraordinary courage, will power, and above all a sort of morbid desire to perform some great deed. As he grew older he became intensely partiotic and expressed his willingness to sacrifice his life for the fatherland. Various entries in his diary [1] throw light upon his character and are thus important in the psychological explanation of his deed. At one time when he heard that Napoleon was to pass through his home town he felt, according to an entry in the diary, that he could not refrain from making a "deadly assault upon the oppressor of

[1] A number of these entries are given by Jarcke—*Karl Ludwig Sand und sein an Kotzebue verübter Mord,* 150ff.; cf. also Biedermann, *25 Jahre deutscher Geschichte,* I, 186ff.

his fatherland should he meet him face to face."[1] After the war he took a leading part in founding a branch of the Burschenschaft at Erlangen and noted in his diary that "the spirit of the organization consists in a burning hatred of the internal as well as the external enemies of the fatherland."[2] His patriotism was accompanied by an ardent religious exaltation, and gradually he became visionary, manifesting an inclination toward the exceptional and the fantastic. In April 1816 while taking the sacrament with his parents he noted in his diary: "O, if only I could die this very moment for some noble purpose."[3] At times he became taciturn, then peevish, and again overbearing. All these traits indicate already an abnormal psychology. For the Wartburg meeting he wrote a paper with such passages as the following:[4] "We will be free in the fatherland or die with it if God commands it;" "In open conflict the individual must oppose evil of his own free will and on his own responsibility so that others will not be implicated in his action;" and again, "the rejuvenation of the fatherland by a few enlightened youths of noble nature." Sand seems to have known little about Kotzebue until the Wartburg meeting. After this celebration he entered the University of Jena and on the 19th of November, 1817, made the following entry[5] in his diary: "Kotzebue's new insults have been proclaimed in the market-place. Oh, how he hates us patriotic students." From this time on he cherished a growing dislike for Kotzebue and this aversion was inflamed by Luden's disclosure in the "Nemesis" that Kotzebue was a spy in the service of the Russian government. His hatred of Kotzebue now became so intense that he wrote[6] in May, 1818: "When I consider the matter I think somebody ought to have courage enough to

[1] Biedermann, I, 187.

[2] Ibid., 188.

[3] Ibid., 190.

[4] Ibid., 189.

[5] Jarcke, 150.

[6] Ibid.

thrust his sword through the body of Kotzebue or of any other such traitor." On November 2, 1818, he wrote as follows:[1] "From self-conviction, with unqualified will, except which nothing in this world is of value to me in the eyes of God; to defend the people's God-given rights against all man-made laws at the risk of one's life; to work to introduce a pure humanity among the German people by preaching and dying; that seems to me quite different than to renounce life and the people. What boundless strength, what a benediction do I feel in my will! I tremble no longer! This is the condition of true likeness to God." On December 4th: "O the momentous hour when I decided to live unconditionally for my country, when I broke the thousand bonds which restrained me from dying for my fatherland. Through my will I decide unconditionally, oh eternal holy God, for thy kingdom, for freedom! Not to decide to live from conviction, not to die for it, is sinful; it is the sin of millions." [2]

From the foregoing it seems quite certain that the assassination of Kotzebue had become a fixed idea in the mind of Sand nearly a year before he ever met Follen, with whom he could not have become intimately acquainted until the end of October, 1818, since Follen did not leave Giessen until the early part of that month.[3] Sand was a pensive dreamer, longing to commit some notorious deed and brooding in secret over the question whether he himself should take vengeance on Kotzebue or not. In this state of mind he came under the influence of Follen's teachings, and it seems very plausible that his purpose might have been strengthened by them as the diary entries of November 2d and December 4th indicate. That Sand had fully decided the question before the end of the year is evident from a note written in the diary on December 31st, as follows:[4] "I am spending the last day of this year, 1818, in a solemn mood, and I am resolved that the

[1] Biedermann, I, 190.

[2] Ibid.

[3] *Works*, I, 67.

[4] Jarcke, 150.

Christmas which I have just celebrated will have been my last. If anything is to come of our efforts; if the cause of humanity is to prevail in our fatherland; if in this momentous time enthusiasm is to revive again in our country and everything not be forgotten again, then the traitor and seducer of youth, A. v. K., must fall—this I fully recognize." Even if Follen's doctrine of political assassination did serve to confirm Sand in his resolution it can hardly be assumed that the acquaintance between them at this time had become intimate enough to permit him to suggest to Sand the commission of any special act even if he himself did have such a project in mind, which is highly improbable.

For a time Sand seemed to waver in his resolution, "praying that God would save him from this act," as he testified at his trial,[1] "and hoping that somebody else would commit the deed;" but after meditating again upon the sad condition of the country he finally wrote in his diary: "Ye princes, why do you force me to this act," and then renewed his resolve, considering it "a call from God, which I dare not disregard." Before leaving Jena to carry out his project against Kotzebue, who was then living in Mannheim, Sand wrote a long letter to his Jena friends, informing them of his intentions and exonerating them from all suspicion. This letter along with another document, "Todesstoss Kotzebues," enclosed in one package and addressed to the Burschenschaft, was found in Sand's unlocked desk after the crime had been committed. Whether he left this package in his desk or whether he gave it to someone else to place there after the commission of the crime could not be determined. In addition to this he left behind a second package containing a letter to his parents and also three letters addressed to three different newspapers; these three letters contained copies of the "Todesstoss" and a justification of his contemplated crime. Sand spent two weeks on the journey to Mannheim, and the fact that the letter to his parents was posted at Jena and reached its destination after the commission of the crime

[1] Biedermann, I, 200.

proves that it had been entrusted to some friend to mail. A number of Sand's friends were arrested as accomplices, among them Follen, who was tried first in Weimar in May and in the following October at Mannheim, but in the long trying examination, in which he was confronted by Sand, no legal evidence was found against him. Sand stoutly maintained that he had no accomplice or confidant, that he had planned and carried out the deed without the aid or knowledge of any individual or any secret organization. When called upon to explain how the letter to his parents had been sent from Jena after he had departed from there he replied that he had left it in the care of his friend, Friedrich Asmis. With tears in his eyes the latter protested his innocence, whereupon Sand finally admitted that he had turned the package over to Follen to deliver to Asmis. This in turn was stubbornly denied by Follen. If it be granted for the sake of argument that Sand did actually entrust Follen with the posting of this letter at a given date it does not necessarily follow, as Hausenstein [1] points out, that the latter had any knowledge of Sand's intentions. If Sand did leave the first package in his open desk it could easily have been discovered and delivered to the Burschenschaft in time to prevent him from carrying out his project. Therefore it seems more reasonable to suppose that, if he was discreet, he entrusted it to some friend with instructions to place it in his desk after a given time. Even if it be assumed that this friend was Follen it does not prove that he was Sand's confidant. The trial established the fact also that Follen had loaned Sand the money for his journey, but this likewise does not by any means indicate that he had the least knowledge of Sand's project or even of his eventual destination.

After the facts brought out by the foregoing discussion the testimony of some of Follen's and Sand's associates must next be examined. Not long after Sand had paid the penalty for his crime Johannes Wit, whom Follen had befriended in many ways in Jena, published a pamphlet in which he pro-

[1] *Süddeutsche Monatshefte,* 1906, II, 200.

fessed to disclose the schemes of the liberal party, branding Follen especially as a dangerous revolutionist and as the instigator of the Kotzebue murder. Wit had professed the greatest devotion to Follen, but when he saw that he had attached himself to a failing cause he went over to the side of its enemies in order to save himself from danger. Wit was a political renegade of the first rank, and even such historians as Treitschke [1] admit that little credence can be given to his statements. Although the Jena students found Wit an agreeable companion they considered him so unreliable, as Leo reports,[2] that they did not take him into their confidence concerning their private matters, although he considered himself the chief actor in all that took place. According to Rechtlieb Zeitgeist [3] many of them regarded him as a spy in the service of his uncle, Baron Eckstein, who was at that time Inspector General of the French police. However this may be it may safely be assumed that Follen was too discreet to disclose to such a notably unstable character as Wit plans of various assassinations, as the latter asserts,[4] had he entertained such thoughts.

To Wit's attack upon Follen Wesselhöft replied in his *Teutsche Jugend,* admitting that Follen advocated political assassination in theory, but denying that he was actively engaged in an attempt to put the doctrine into actual practice. Treitschke[5] calls Wesselhöft's defense of Follen nothing but a cleverly written misleading lawyer's plea. Wesselhöft was indeed a friend and admirer of Follen and belonged to his circle of Jena friends, but by no means countenanced his Jesuitical principles and his doctrine of unconditionality.[6] If he had

[1] Cf. *Deutsche Geschichte im 19. Jahrhundert,* II, 522.

[2] *Meine Jugendzeit,* 179.

[3] *Demagogische Umtriebe,* II, 691.

[4] *Fragmente,* I, 29ff.

[5] *Deutsche Geschichte,* II, 522.

[6] *Teutsche Jugend,* 88f.: "We took a hearty interest in Follen and remained his friends even after we felt called upon to say to him: From henceforth we are against you.—His whole being and thinking

actually subscribed to them Treitschke's unfavorable comment on his defense of Follen would carry more weight than it otherwise does.

Probably the most thorough and non-partisan discussion of Sand's deed is Jarcke's psychologic-criminalistic analysis [1] published in 1824. Jarcke holds that Sand's life fully proves that the crime had its origin in the intellectual life then prevalent at the universities, and not merely in a narrow circle. Not all who embraced the movement were as radical as Sand or would have countenanced assassination to realize their political aims. Many started from the same premises as Sand, but the latter was carried along irresistably by the intellecual current. It is, however, a wrong conception, Jarcke maintains, to believe that those false political maxims had their origin in certain individuals, or that the evil could be overcome by getting rid of these false teachers. To be sure individuals could appear as the representatives of the intellectual tendency and could contribute to it, but the source of the erroneous thoughts lies deeper. What seems like the evil will of individuals in an erroneous, suddenly appearing intellectual movement is merely, as Jarcke explains it, the product of a long chain of circumstances which are independent of individual, human plans and aims. Thus the revolutionary movement must be distinguished carefully from a mere dissatisfaction with rulers and political conditions. Jarcke believes that it was the necessary product of that intellectual movement that placed the human Ego in the foreground and made human reason the law of the free man, for this conception of life places authority not in God, but in the reason—the reason of

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was penetrated by a moral conviction which was in perfect unity with itself, which had become truth and certainty to him, without which he could not be what he is, could not become and remain good and noble. —He would willingly have attained in a peaceful manner what he deemed indispensably necessary for his country and people if there had been the slightest chance of his succeeding, but he held himself prepared for war as soon as peace was broken. Never, however, did he act in defiance of lawful organizations. He denied only the justice of police authority, which he looked upon as a misuse of power, an invasion of the existing legal constitution and of civil liberty."

[1] *Karl Ludwig Sand und sein an Kotzebue verübter Mord.* 262ff.

the individual, or the collective reason of the people. This atheistic system, as he calls it, leads to a republic, and is, in his opinion, the national enemy of the Christian-German conception of law and state. From this standpoint, then, it is an error to consider the movement of Sand and his companions a momentary aberration of a few eccentric young people; it is on the contrary a phenomenon which of historical necessity had to come forth from deep spiritual motives. But it would be just as erroneous to treat these religious and political errors, according to Jarcke, as a personal malignity of those who cherished them, or to misunderstand the sad truth that during that period many of the best heads and noblest hearts in the German universities were drawn into the magic circle of the revolutionary movement. The fact can and must not be passed over in silence that many of the best youths who at that time cherished the false theories became afterwards the noblest and best men. When one considers how widely that movement was disseminated it is certain, in Jarcke's judgment, that Sand received from all his companions of like persuasion countless outer suggestions and impulses to his crime. By the nature of the case it must, however, remain inscrutable as to who perhaps involuntarily stimulated him, who perhaps instigated him unintentionally against the victim of his fanaticism, what unintentional assertion hastened him on the path he had chosen. "And so in my opinion," Jarcke concludes,[1] "the main cause of the crime was Sand's desire to do some striking deed that would astonish the nation and at the same time would serve as a shining example to his friends and companions; the second and more remote cause was his religious political system, and it lay rather in accidental circumstances that his longed-for great deed was the assassination of Kotzebue."

The report of the Central Investigation Commission at Mainz, which was appointed to inquire into the whole revolutionary movement, and also the investigation instituted by the Prussian government, showed conclusively that Sand's deed

[1] Ibid., 150.

was not the result of any secret propaganda. This verdict was accepted as final until Friedrich Münch's [1] disclosures again opened up the controversy. In 1873, more than half a century after the event, Münch, who had taken at least some part in the Giessen Burschenschaft movement, felt constrained to reveal what he alleges to be a true version of the affair. According to his account [2] the murder of Kotzebue was not merely the deed of a fanatic who felt himself divinely appointed to rid the land of tyrants, but that it was the result of a plan coolly concocted by Follen and his friends. He asserts further [3] that Follen's younger brother, Paul, had a

[1] Friedrich Münch (1799-1881) was associated with Paul Follen in organizing the Giessen Emigration Society and came to Warren County, Mo., in 1834, where he spent the remainder of his life.

[2] "Erinnerungen": *Gesammelte Schriften,* 56f.: "Eine Revolution direkt zu machen, ging nicht an. Aber einen allgemein als Verräter an der deutschen Ehre und Freiheit gebrandmarkten Menschen in der möglichst auffallenden Weise zu strafen und aus dem Wege zu schaffen, dadurch die ganze Nation zum Gefühl ihrer Schmach mächtig aufzuregen, Tausende anzufeuern, dass sie, dem gegebenen Beispiel folgend, auch ihre Dolche blitzen liessen, wonach dann *das Volk zu den Waffen greifen* und *alle seine Plager totschlagen würde* (italics are mine)—das schien erreichbar und tunlich.—Das Falsche in der Berechnung rührt daher, dass Follen bei aller sonstigen Einsicht doch die Masse des Volkes, seine Stimmung und Anschauung nicht kannte. Und warum verrichtete Follen die Tat nicht selbst? Aus reiner Oekonomie; denn der Gedanke der Selbstaufopferung war ihm in der Tat einer der liebsten. Ihm war aber eine höhere Aufgabe gestellt, seiner konnte die künftige Revolution als ihres Führers nicht entbehren, — er musste für das Schwerere, das noch kommen sollte, sich erhalten. Hätte er dies sich nicht selbst gesagt, so sagte Sand es ihm jedenfalls, und er musste die Tat dem Freunde überlassen, der eben dafür und nicht für noch Bedeutenderes sich befähigt hielt."

[3] Ibid., 96ff.: "Wie Karl Follen der Tat Sands nicht ferne gestanden hatte, so stand Paul dem Attentat von Löhning wohl auch näher. War Sands Tat von Jena ausgegangen, so musste die zweite der Ordnung gemäss von Giessen aus erfolgen. — So sassen denn in dem Hinterstübchen einer Dorfschenke an der Grenze von Hessen und Nassau in nächtlicher Beratung drei Männer zusammen, einer aus Giessen — derjenige, welcher dort Karl Follen's Geist am meisten vertrat — dann Pfarrer F. aus der Wetterau und der Apothekergehülfe Löhning, welcher erst seit Kurzem aus innerem Drange die Bekanntschaft der Vaterlandsfreunde gesucht und sich ihnen angeschlossen hatte. Man einigte sich darüber, dass Ibell fallen müsse und wollte das Loos darüber entscheiden lassen, welcher von den Dreien das Urteil vollstrecken sollte. Es fiel auf den ersten der drei Genannten, aber Löhning führte überzeugend aus, dass mit Recht ihm, dem näheren Landsmann Ibells, die Rolle des Rächers zukomme, und forderte die Tat für sich."

hand in planning the assassination of von Ibell. Following Münch's statements, upon which he relies unreservedly, Treitschke paints a very sinister portrait [1] of Follen, condemning him first of all on purely circumstantial evidence; although he admits that guilt in the strict judicial sense cannot be proved, he accepts Münch's verdict [2] to the contrary. It is well known that Treitschke was one of the strongest champions of the monarchic principle, that he denied the right of the people to self-government, and that he was the sworn enemy of republicanism; therefore it is not surprising to find his account of Follen colored by political prejudice. Without doubt his condemnation of Follen is too severe, as Haupt [3] observes, and this is the more to be regretted since the statements of such a recognized authority carries great weight.

It now remains to examine the testimony of Münch, first in regard to specific statements and then concerning its general credibility.

[1] *Deutsche Geschichte im 19. Jahrhundert,* II, 522: "Sicherlich hat der unselige Mensch (Sand) geglaubt, dass er seinen Entschluss in voller Freiheit gefasst habe, denn nur die aus eigener Ueberzeugung entspringende Tat liess er entgelten; es ist aber psychologisch unmöglich, dass der menschenkundige Karl Follen, der mit seinem Basiliskenblick den wehrlosen Schwachkopf vollkommen beherrschte und in dieser dürftigen Seele wie in einem offenen Buche las, den Mordplan nicht bemerkt und befördert haben sollte. So gewiss die Aehre dem Saatkorn entspriesst, eben so gewiss erscheint der Prediger des politischen Mordes vor dem sittlichen Urteil der Geschichte als der Urheber der Ermordung Kotzebues. Ein Mitwisser des gefassten Entschlusses war er unzweifelhaft; er verschaffte das Reisegeld für die Wanderfahrt nach Mannheim; unterrichtete seine Getreuen in allen Schlichen und Kniffen des Kriminalprozesses und belehrte sie sorgsam über ihr Verhalten vor dem Untersuchungsrichter."

[2] Ibid., II, 522: "Diese Tatsachen mussten unglaubhaft erscheinen, so lange sie nur durch die Denkwürdigkeiten des elenden Denunzianten Wit von Döring, bezeugt waren; heute lassen sie sich nicht mehr bezweifeln, seit ein vertrauter Freund der Gebrüder Follen, Friedrich Münch, sie wiederholt auf das Bestimmteste zugegeben hat. Münch beruft sich auf vertrauliche Mitteilungen seines Freundes, Paul Follen; er ist ein Mann von anerkannter Rechtschaffenheit und ich sehe nicht ein, warum die nachdrücklichen Versicherungen der ehrlichen Radikalen, die ohnehin nichts Unwahrscheinliches enthalten, unglaubhaft sein sollen. Das zur Verteidigung Karl Follen's geschriebene anonyme Büchlein *Teutschlands Jugend in weiland Burschenschaften und Turngemeinden* (by R. Wesselhöft) ist nichts weiter als eine gewandte unaufrichtige Advokatenschrift."

[3] *Follen und die Giessener Schwarzen,* 24.

Münch states explicitly that Follen instigated the Kotzebue murder not only to get rid of a hated traitor, but also to arouse "das Volk zu den Waffen greifen und alle seine Plager totschlagen." The striking resemblance of this phraseology to that of the stanza of the Great Song where the poet exclaims: "Volk, ins Gewehr!" Schlagt eure Plager tot!" causes one to wonder whether Münch is not constructing a hypothetical case out of Follen's revolutionary utterances rather than stating an actual fact. His statement, too, that Paul Follen and others cast lots to determine who should murder von Ibell, and that in accordance with a definite plan this deed was to proceed from Giessen and Sand's from Jena, should be accepted with caution. "As Karl Follen was closely connected with Sand's deed, Paul was probably (wohl) more closely connected with that of Löhning." It seems strange that Münch should begin his account of the assault on von Ibell with such a hypothetical statement and close it with the most positive assertions. Stern observes [1] that after Kotzebue was murdered wild rumors sprang up over the whole country to the effect that the students were casting lots to determine which university should choose an assassin for Kotzebue, Stourdza, Schmalz, etc.; and in view of the fact that Münch's story is identical with these rumors, which were proved groundless, one is tempted to conclude that his recollections are somewhat clouded or that his story is, as Biedermann [2] suggests, a myth altogether.

Although Wit was Follen's chief accuser he confesses [3] that the latter was by no means cruel or blood-thirsty by nature, that he was in no way connected with the attempt against von Ibell's life, that he cared nothing about so unimportant a man as Kotzebue, that he was at that time strongly opposed

[1] *Geschichte Europas,* I, 557.

[2] *25 Jahre deutscher Geschichte,* I, 206.

[3] *Fragmente,* I, 37ff.: "One would do him a great injustice to regard the projected murder of von Ibell as his work. This was due without question to the hatred of the Unconditionals against the distinguished statesman, who was considered responsible for the dismissal of criminal judge, Wm. Snell." Snell was also a revolutionist and closely connected with the Giessen Blacks.

to assassination because he knew well that the people would thereby turn against the cause in whose interest it was committed, and that if he did in spite of that send Sand to murder Kotzebue it was done to see how the people would regard it. Wit supplements this statement by another to the effect that one of Sand's friends sought in 1820 to borrow money from Follen in order to go to Baden to assassinate the Grand Duke out of revenge for Sand's execution, but that Follen with great difficulty dissuaded him from his purpose.

As further evidence against Münch's statements Wolfgang Menzel, who was well acquainted with Follen in Jena, but did not share his views, testified as follows [1] a few years after Münch's disclosures were published: "People have slandered the Unconditionals by saying that they cast lots to see who should murder Kotzebue, but those young men were not so depraved as that. Sand made the resolve of his own accord after he had strengthened his stoical courage in Follen's club, but in no way had he received any instruction regarding any definite act.—Sand was capable of such a decision of his own accord; it was the result of his religious enthusiasm. Had anybody sought to persuade him to do what he did not feel impelled to do spontaneously he would have refused." [2]

A few years after Menzel's account appeared Heinrich Leo published his memoirs, which also place Münch's statements in a doubtful light. It should be borne in mind that Wesselhöft, Menzel, and Leo actually associated with Follen and Sand in Jena and speak from first-hand knowledge, while Münch was at that time in Giessen 125 miles away; and the fact that these men did not agree with Follen in his radical doctrines would tend to remove any suspicion that their testimony was biased in his favor. Leo lived in the same house with Sand and was most intimately acquainted with him. Contrary to Wit, who says that himself, Follen and Sand were the only bona fide Unconditionals in Jena, Leo asserts [3] that

[1] *Denkwürdigkeiten,* 129.

[2] Cf. Sand's own statement in his diary entry for Nov. 2, 1818.

[3] *Meine Jugendzeit,* 186.

there were still others, that while Sand was an Unconditional, as his deed proves, he was never a member of Follen's narrower circle, but dawdled around in a certain dilletantism of Teutonism and free thought without having any fixed theory; hence he was not relied upon by his friends for any practical end. Leo states emphatically that the questions of unconditionality and of political assassination were discussed not only in Follen's club, but in other circles all over Jena, and expresses his belief that Sand was induced by these discussions to determine by experiment whether the people would approve of such violent revolutionary measures or not. Upon hearing the remark of a certain Jena professor, that some enthusiast or other would take vengeance on Kotzebue for his traitorous conduct Sand replied to Leo,[1] that it would certainly be a good opportunity to test the question as to what sort of impression a political murder would make. According to Leo[2] Wit's story[3] concerning Follen's alleged plan to assassinate the Czar of Russia was due to a farcical discussion of that subject to test the courage of a few who seemed to be wavering in their conviction. Wit was one of the innocent victims of this mock debate. Leo relates further[4] that on the day Sand's deed was reported in Jena the town was so excited that it would have been easy to find dozens of men to commit a like act. The fact that all these dozens of men did not belong to Follen's circle, that political assassination was discussed outside of Follen's circle, would indicate plainly that there were other sources besides Follen from which Sand could have been influenced. Leo's final verdict[5] is that Sand had no confidant, and was aided only in an indirect way.

Now as to the general reliability of Münch's testimony: The value of any historical source depends not only upon the capability and the good will of the writer to tell the truth, but

[1] Ibid., 220.

[2] Ibid., 180f.

[3] *Fragmente,* I, 29ff.

[4] *Meine Jugendzeit,* 188.

[5] Ibid., 188.

also upon the relative demonstrability of the truth of what he recounts. If the truth cannot be positively demonstrated then probability or even possibility must be taken as the criterion. But one condition is necessary before a source can be recognized as original, that is, it must bear the stamp of independence. There seems to be no reason for doubting Münch's honesty, but the same cannot be said concerning his ability. And why? In the first place, he was not on the scene of action; the story he tells is hear-say evidence related to him years after the events themselves; while his publication of it to the world was made still many more years later, after his memory had become clouded as he several times admits in the course of his narrative. As to the truth of his report it cannot be demonstrated; it is possible, but in view of the evidence already introduced it seems improbable. Münch claims [1] that his account of Follen's European career is original and independent: "Of no part of my life," to use his own words, "do I have such a keen recollection as of that which I spent with my youthful companions. Therein I possess for this sketch such a rich and trustworthy source as few biographers have at their disposal. Besides, I have lived long enough and experienced enough to enable me to form an independent judgment of circumstances and persons." Whether this statement actually squares with Münch's narrative is a question which J. Hermann has thoroughly discussed in his "Kritik der Nachrichten über die Attentate von 1819." [2]

For that part of his account which deals with Follen's American career Münch had of necessity to depend wholly upon the biography of Mrs. Follen. Concerning Follen's personal appearance, his moral character, and his philosophical principles he quotes Wesselhöft verbatim, admitting[3] in a footnote that he is "compelled to quote from an English translation." The fact that there was no other translation of Wesselhöft's work than the extracts given in Mrs. Follen's biography

[1] *Gesammelte Schriften,* 40.

[2] Cf. *Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte,* XXIII, 573-592.

[3] *Gesammelte Schriften,* 60.

shows that Münch made use of this biography also as a source for his account of Follen's European career. Taking this as his first clew Hermann carefully analyses Münch's account, comparing many passages side by side with extracts from Wesselhöft's and Mrs. Follen's narratives. This comparison shows that Münch has contributed nothing except the alleged new information concerning the assassination of Kotzebue and von Ibell and a few minor matters connected with the Giessen movement, some of which either from lack of first-hand knowledge or from faulty memory are inaccurately portrayed. The rest of his account consists for the most part in translation direct from Mrs. Follen and Wesselhöft, or in paraphrases with certain expressions retained which betray their origin. This proves, according to Hermann,[1] that Münch's account of Follen's life in Germany is in the main taken from Mrs. Follen, and cannot therefore, contrary to Münch's own claims, be regarded as an original and independent source; hence his version of Sand's deed must be considered at least as improbable. Hausenstein [2] is of the opinion that Hermann is hypercritical and hence unjust, but admits that he himself is surprised at Münch's omission of all details of the Kotzebue assassination and at his surprising generalizations. Jastrow,[3] on the other hand, believes that Hermann's "searching critique" has rendered Münch's testimony wholly inadmissible.

In conclusion, one more argument may be brought forward for consideration: Most of those who have argued for or against the probability of Follen's implication in the Kotzebue affair have been guided wholly by their knowledge of his European career only. Those who believe that he cherished bloody designs against the German rulers base their arguments for the most part on his radical revolutionary doctrine. He did indeed advocate the overthrow of despotism through assassination if necessary, but it is quite probable, as already suggested, that many of his rabid utterances were for

[1] *Forschungen,* XXIII, 579.

[2] *Süddeutsche Monatshefte,* 1906, II, 199.

[3] *Geschichte des deutschen Einheitstraumes,* 330.

the most part "harmless braggadocia," to quote the words of Jarcke.[1] An analysis of his whole life and character speaks eloquently against the assumption that he ever seriously countenanced the practical application of his stern theory. Treitschke states that it was "psychologically impossible for him not to have promoted Sand's murderous scheme." Indirectly? Possibly. Using Treitschke's own argument it is only fair to insist that it was psychologically impossible for Follen to have intentionally and knowingly brought about Kotzebue's death. In the first place he was too shrewd to run the risk of committing an act which would be sure to crush the revolutionary movement, as Sand's deed really did; in the second place, his whole nature would have cried out against such a useless shedding of blood. Not only Follen's youthful companions, but especially his American friends unanimously agree that he was one of the kindliest, purest, and noblest characters they had ever known. Both from the standpoint of his ethical system and from the bottom of his heart he reverenced human life above all things; he would even step out of his path to avoid crushing the ugliest worm, believing that it too was a spark of the divine life. Had his hands been stained with human blood, especially with that of so harmless a man as Kotzebue, he could hardly have passed through life as a teacher of Christlike perfection without betraying at some time in some way his duplicity,[2] for "his heart was always on his tongue," as Wesselhöft expresses it, and all are agreed that hypocrisy was foreign to his nature.

In view therefore of all the foregoing considerations it seems safe to assume that Follen was innocent until better proof than that which Münch and Treitschke have given can be adduced to the contrary.[3] But however that may be, one

[1] *Karl Ludwig Sand,* Chap. 3.

[2] After completing this chapter I found this conclusion corroborated by Max Lenz in his *Geschichte der Universität Berlin,* II, 49ff., Berlin, 1910.

[3] This statement, too, I later found corroborated by Charles Seignobos in his *Political History of Europe since 1814,* p. 385, N. Y., 1900. He says: "Treitschke, deceived by the false account given by Münch, believed there was a revolutionary conspiracy."

thing is certain: Even if his head was not level on the subject of political theory, even if his tongue was at times unruly, his heart was always in the right place; and the irrepressible enthusiasm of this tempestuous struggle of his youth was followed by a career of the serenest virtue.

IN POLITICAL EXILE.

Owing to the notoriety occasioned by his supposed connection with the assassination of Kotzebue Follen was removed from his position in the University of Jena in the autumn of 1819. As an object of suspicion to many he now returned to Giessen, but was from this time on under constant police surveillance. In view of the hopeless political outlook, and convinced too that he was no longer safe in Germany, he now conceived the idea of emigrating to the United States to continue there his efforts on behalf of political reform in his native land. To this end he entered into communication with a few of his faithful political friends who had associated with him in the Giessen Burschenschaft movement, discussing with them plans, which he had already sketched, for the founding of a German republic in America.

The main argument [1] of this memorial [2] was, that since all efforts to meliorate the intolerable political conditions under which Germany was languishing had failed the only alternative left to the friends of liberty was to found a German state in America to serve as an asylum for political refugees and as a base from which to continue the propaganda for unity and democracy in the mother country. Follen believed that the highest task of the American commonwealth was to realize the ideal of freedom in its purest form, but expressed the belief that "the deeper spiritual import of freedom, which alone can lay the foundation of America's world-supremacy, must proceed from Germany, the center of all modern culture." As a part of his comprehensive program a German educational

[1] Cf. Haupt, 146.

[2] The document itself, entitled, *Denkschrift über die deutsche Bildungsanstalt in Nordamerika,* is preserved only in the government archives at Berlin.

institution embracing all branches of knowledge was to be erected in this proposed free-state for the purpose of strengthening the German-Americans' love for their native language, manners and customs, and of maintaining and developing German national culture in general. The faculty of this seminary was to be selected from Follen's circle of political friends, especially from those university professors who had been dismissed on account of their liberal political views,—men such as Fries, Oken, DeWette, Fr. Forster and the Snell brothers. "In this manner," says Follen in his memorial, "the Germans of North America can be successfully organized into a state to be represented in Congress, which shall become a model for the mother country and in many respects render it an important service in freeing it from the shackles of tyranny."

Through the activity of the government in arresting as political agitators a number of Follen's most active confederates his American project had to be abandoned for the time being, but it resulted ultimately in the formation of the Giessen Emigration Society, which sent a large colony to Warren County, Missouri, under the direction of Follen's younger brother in 1833. This was one of the earliest and most ambitious of those many unsuccessful attempts[1] to found German colonies in this country during the 30's and 40's of the past century.

While Follen was engaged in maturing his new plans his elder brother and his friend, Ludwig Snell, were suddenly arrested on suspicion of promoting revolutionary propaganda. Learning that a copy of his memorial had been found in Snell's possession and that he himself was to be arrested on the charge of being its author, he took hasty leave of his family and fled across the French frontier in the early part of January, 1820. The following verses,[2] written by one of his small group of Blacks, or possibly by himself, may well express his emotions

[1] Cf. T. S. Baker's account of these projects,—*Americana Germanica,* I, 62ff. Baker makes no mention of Karl Follen as the originator of this colonization movement.

[2] Cited by Haupt, 148.

as he departed from his home, henceforth to wander, a martyr to the cause of liberty and an exile from his native land:

Ich selbst ich will die Freiheit mir bewahren,
An ihrem heiligen Flammenlicht mich weiden,
Mit diesen Armen, diesen Sehnen streiten,
Nicht brache liegen in der Jugend Jahren.
O, wahrlich, mir thuts weh von Euch zu scheiden,
Die lieben Berg und Thäler fern zu missen,
Der alten Väter heilig Grab zu meiden.
Mit Schmerz und Thränen bin ich losgerissen.

Ein neues Vaterland geh ich zu finden,
Wo Vater Franklins frische Seele baute,
Die mündige Welt der eigenen Kraft vertraute,
Der Freiheit junges Licht sich will entzünden!
Da drüben wächst sie auf zur jungen Eiche.
Wir bringen Zunder zu den regen Flammen,
Zum neuen Kreuzzug zum gelobten Reiche!
Rom ist, wo freie Römer steh'n zusammen.

After spending a few days in Strassburg Follen proceeded to Paris where he soon made the acquaintance of such men as Lafayette, D'Argenson, Cousin, Constant, and Grégoire. His association with these noted liberals served first of all to dispel his hatred of the French, which had been inspired in the German youth by Arndt, broadened his conceptions of the brotherhood of mankind, and confirmed him in his republican principles. According to Wit,[1] who met him in Paris at this time, his intimate association with members of the French Comité Directeur led him to begin preparations for a similar organization in Germany to cooperate with the French liberals; but his sojourn in France was of short duration, for the assassination of the Duke of Berry on the 13th of February, led to the expulsion of all foreigners who had no fixed occupation. Believing that he might still be able to promote the liberal movement, he went to Switzerland where he found refuge with the Countess of Benzal-Sternau, who had followed with deep interest his public career in Germany.

[1] *Fragmente,* I, 55.

In the autumn of this same year Follen secured a position as teacher of Latin and history in the Cantonal school of Chur, where his talent and genial nature won him the highest regard of his pupils and colleagues. In his lectures on history it was but natural that he should give occasional expression to his radical views on politics and religion, namely, the principles of freedom as he interpreted them from the life of Christ. This led to two momentous results. In the first place his ideas of political freedom were again reported to the rulers of Germany; consequently a demand was made by the Holy Alliance, assembled in council at Troppau, that he and all others engaged in revolutionary agitation be handed over to a tribunal of inquisition, a demand to which the Swiss government refused to accede. In the second place his religious views brought him into conflict with the Calvinistic clergy. Without entering into controversial theology he had endeavored in his lectures simply to trace the growth of Christianity and the great spiritual revolution effected by Christ's teachings of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. This interpretation seemed a bit heretical to the orthodox party, who accordingly accused him of denying the divinity of Christ, the doctrine of original sin, and the total depravity of man. When he learned that the Council of Education was instituting a secret inquiry among his pupils he requested of the assembled evangelical synod a public hearing to defend the principles he had advanced. This request was cleverly evaded by a hasty adjournment of the synod, whereupon he forthwith resigned his position in the school.

Follen's reputation as a scholar and the highly complimentary recommendation [1] of the school board of Chur secured for him an appointment as lecturer on jurisprudence and metaphysics in the newly reorganized university of Basel whither he went in the autumn of 1821. Among the professors there he found several of his compatriots, who like himself had for political reasons been obliged to flee from Germany. In close communion with these kindred spirits he spent three busy

[1] Cf. *Works,* I, 110.

happy years, and his engagement to Anna de Lassaux[1] added a new charm to life. In addition to his academic duties he took part in the publication of DeWette's journal,[2] and in private proclaimed his gospel of freedom, seeking to instill into the hearts and minds of his students the doctrine of the natural rights of man. But this period of buoyant hope and joyous promise was soon to end, for Karl Follen was a proscribed man.

Switzerland was at that time the only free state on the continent, and from that stronghold of liberty he again took up his propaganda for the establishment of freedom and union in his native land. In conjunction with a few of his friends, as it seems,[3] he founded a new political society and sent von Sprewitz, one of the Jena Burschenschafter, who was traveling in Switzerland, to organize branches in Germany. Although this so-called "Jünglingsbund" made little headway its existence was dicovered by the police in 1823. Arrested in the spring of 1824 as one of its promoters, Wit[4] turned state's evidence, declaring that Follen was the instigator of the new movement. Whether this was true or not the Prussian government, in order to stifle the growing spirit of freedom, not only forbade its subjects to attend the university of Basel, but in August, 1824, the Holy Alliance demanded again that Follen and others be handed over to the tribunal of Köpenick to answer to the charge of conspiring to subvert the monarchic status of Prussia. For a time the Swiss government refused to comply with this demand, but when the intimidating order was repeated it was thought more expedient to sacrifice individuals than to endanger the welfare of the whole state. Accordingly Follen was requested to leave the canton, which

[1] Cf. Follen-Briefe—*Jahrbuch der Deutsch-Amerikanischen Historischen Gesellschaft von Illinois,* XIV, 5.

[2] *Zeitschrift der wissenschaftlichen Religion;* to this Follen contributed two treatises, Ueber die Bestimmung des Menschen, and Ueber Spinoza's Lehre.

[3] Haupt, 149.

[4] *Fragmente,* II, 12ff. Rechtlieb Zeitgeist, II, 556ff., denies that Follen set this movement on foot.

he refused to do without a legal trial. If he had committed any offense he had the right, he contended, to be tried by a tribunal of the state to which he belonged. Inasmuch as he had become a citizen of the Republic and had never owed allegiance to the Holy Alliance, he maintained that the Swiss government was neither obliged nor entitled to deliver him up to the inquisition of Köpenick. He knew very well that the Holy Alliance wished to make an example of him in order to deter others from following his teachings, and that imprisonment or even death awaited him should he be arrested. On a previous visit to Paris his friend, Lafayette, had urged him to go to America, but he refused on the ground that a voluntary withdrawal from Basel would be construed as a tacit admission of guilt. When he learned, however, that his arrest had actually been ordered and that his safety lay only in flight he decided to seek refuge in the new world. Before leaving he requested of the university a public statement concerning his conduct in Switzerland; this was granted, and the certified copy[1] which was later sent to him shows that he was held in the highest esteem, not only as an ideal teacher by his pupils and colleagues, but by the magistrates of the Republic as a model citizen.

Through the aid of friends Follen secretly left Basel and made his escape in safety to Paris where he met a small party of German political fugitives among whom was his friend, Karl Beck. Convinced that men of liberal opinions were no longer safe even in Switzerland they decided to cast their lot with Follen in seeking freedom and happiness across the seas. In Paris Follen met his betrothed,[2] arranging with her to join him in America after adequate means of support could be found, and as a farewell expression both of his devotion to her and of his deep love of freedom addressed to her the following lines:

[1] Given in *Works,* I, 119f.

[2] Yielding to her father's wishes she soon after broke off the engagement; cf. Follen-Briefe, No. 13.

Hast du mich lieb, o so gib mir die Hand;
Lass uns wandern, lass uns ziehen
Mit der Sonne nach Westen hin;
Dort an des Meeres andrem Strand,
Dort ist der Freiheit, dort der Menschheit Vaterland.

Follen and Beck reached Havre on the 1st of November and immediately went aboard the Cadmus, the same ship in which Lafayette had taken passage to America a few months earlier. It was with a mingled feeling of joy and sadness that Follen departed from all that was dear to him to begin life anew in a foreign land. As the shores of Europe gradually receded in the distance his long-cherished hopes for the freedom of his country vanished like a dream, but with undaunted courage he faced the unknown future that lay before him. Under the soothing, exalting influence of the boundless sea his dejection soon gave way to new hopes and aspirations, and his youthful dreams again seemed possible of realization. The wild music of wind and waves seemed to awaken in his soul a new sense of life, and in the joyous contemplation of his ideals his love of freedom again came to expression in the following lines,[1] the last poem he ever wrote in his native tongue:

Auch auf dem hölzernen Fische,
Hier mitten im Wassergezische,
    Schwingt das Herz,
    Frei von Schmerz,
Frei wie die Lerche sich himmelwärts.

Stürmt nur, ihr wilden Gewässer,
Wir werden nicht röter, nicht blässer,
    Meergebraus,
    Sturmgesaus,
Ist für die Tapfern ein Ohrenschmaus.

Wenngleich mit wildem Gelüsten
Am Mast die Wasser sich küssten,
    Freiheitsmut,
    Liebesglut,
Brennt auch in Sturm und in Wasserflut.

[1] *Works*, I, 127.

During the voyage Follen and Beck studied a German work on the Constitution of the United States and sought also to acquire some knowledge of the English language. On Sunday, the 19th of December, 1824, the Cadmus arrived at New York. As the ship approached the harbor Follen stood on deck, peering through the dense fog to catch his first glimpse of the promised land. From the distance came the sound of the Sabbath bells; then through a rift in the clouds the sun burst forth, lighting up the glittering spires of the city. So great was his joy and anxiety that he almost feared the splendid vision might vanish before he could set foot on shore; but when he finally found himself standing upon American soil he wished, as he afterwards stated,[1] to kneel upon the ground, and kiss it, and cling to it with his hands, lest it should even then escape his grasp.

[1] Ibid., I, 139.

PART TWO.

FOLLEN IN AMERICA.

After remaining about three weeks in New York Follen and Beck went to Philadelphia. Through the recommendation of Lafayette they soon received a visit [1] from George Ticknor. Through Ticknor's influence Beck secured an immediate appointment as teacher of Latin and gymnastics in the Round Hill School at Northampton, Massachusetts.

Follen remained in Philadelphia nearly a year, devoting himself to the study of the language, manners and customs of the United States. The diary [2] which he kept at that time shows that he was a keen observer in matters pertaining to politics, religion, society, industry, art and literature. He was so pleased with the outlook of American democracy that he made immediate application for citizenship. It is most interesting to learn from the first letter [3] written to his parents shortly after his arrival in Philadelphia the impressions which the new country and its democratic institutions made upon this former revolutionist:

"The government interferes scarcely at all," he writes, "but acts merely as a defense against breaches of the law; and there is certainly no country where one lives more securely without passports, police officers, and soldiers than here. In education they make rapid progress. For the rest they let men alone; and thus everything is much better done than when it is accomplished by direction of the authorities. There are scarcely any taxes, for the government of the whole United States does not cost so much as that of one of our principalities. Any man can call together, by a public announcement, in the open squares an assembly of several thousand, in which petitions to the government may be discussed and its measures criticized; but as yet there has been no disorder or disturbance of the public peace in consequence. The gov-

[1] Cf. *Life, Letters and Journals of Ticknor,* I. 352.

[2] *Works,* I, 133ff., 153ff.

[3] Cf. Follen-Briefe, No. 9—*Jahrbuch der Deutsch-Amerikanischen Historischen Gesellschaft von Illinois,* XIV, 16; given in abridged form in *Works,* I, 144.

ernment does not concern itself with the exercise of religion, speech, or the press except in so far as the rights of any might thereby be impaired. God be praised that we have here so much to do and that we find so rich an enjoyment in this glorious liberty."

In view of this encouraging prospect Follen wisely gave no further thought to his earlier fantastic scheme of Germanizing America by founding a German state here, but unlike some of his compatriots dedicated himself without reserve to the interests and welfare of his adopted country. At first he was unable to decide upon any definite course of action. Through the recommendation of Lafayette he soon became acquainted with the distinguished jurist, Du Ponceau,[1] who introduced him to the leading men of Philadelphia and also suggested him to Jefferson as a suitable teacher of Roman law for the University of Virginia; on account of his imperfect knowledge of English and his unwillingness to live in a slave state he made no effort to secure this position. For a time he thought seriously of joining his former Giessen friend, Christian Sartorius, in Mexico; but thanks to the influence of his Philadelphia friends his great talents were fortunately retained in the service of American culture. In July he paid Beck a visit in Northampton and somewhat later spent a short time in New York where he made the acquaintance of Miss Sedgwick,[2] whose novel, "Redwood," had been his first textbook in the English language. After six months' residence in this country he had made such rapid progress in his studies that he began to write in English a course of lectures on civil law, which he hoped to deliver in Philadelphia; and this although he could, according to the statement of his wife, not utter a correct English sentence when he landed in New York. These lectures were ready to be delivered in October, and from a letter [3] written to Beck at this time it may be inferred that Follen was seriously contemplating law as a permanent

[1] Peter Stephen Du Ponceau (1760-1844), a Frenchman by birth.

[2] Catherine Maria Sedgwick (1789-1867), writer of novels and stories depicting New England life. "Redwood" appeared in 1824.

[3] *Works*, I, 156.

profession. If this decision had been made he would doubtless have won both fortune and reputation as a distinguished jurist, or even as a remarkable statesman; but about this time Ticknor offered him through Du Ponceau an instructorship in German at Harvard, assuring him also that his lectures on law would be highly appreciated in Boston. His acceptance of this position enabled him to enter upon a career in which he probably exerted a much greater influence in contributing to American intellectual life than would have been possible had he chosen the profession of law.

In December, 1825, Follen arrived at Cambridge, entering at once upon the duties of his new position. Besides his regular teaching he began to prepare text-books for his classes and endeavored above all to acquire a more perfect command of the English language. Meanwhile he attracted attention and interest in various quarters, introducing gymnastics in Boston and lecturing there also on civil law to an audience composed mostly of lawyers. Through Miss Sedgwick he became acquainted in the following year with Miss Eliza Cabot, the daughter of one of the best New England families and also a talented member of a brilliant literary circle. This acquaintance soon ripened into a warm friendship, culminating some two years later in marriage. Through Miss Cabot's influence Follen was admitted to her circle of literary friends, and through her he also made the acquaintance of Dr. Channing, which was the beginning of a life-long intimate friendship between these two men.

After a year's residence in Cambridge he again wrote to his parents the following significant lines,[1] which show the inner change that the new surroundings had produced in him and at the same time speak eloquently of his devotion to his adopted country: "I am well and my position here becomes every day more firm and agreeable in proportion as my new countrymen are assured that I am not one of the many adventurers and imposters, through whom the name of a for-

[1] Follen-Briefe, No. 14—*Jahrbuch D. A. H. G.*, XIV, 36ff.; letter given in abridged form in *Works*, I, 164.

eigner has become suspected by the natives. They are convinced that my new country has always been the country of my principles; that I know how to respect the peculiarities of others, and that I attach myself cordially to good men, and particularly to affectionate family circles. It is now seven years since I left home, and I have not during this time, my seven years' private war against the great powers, been permitted to enter my father's house. But you know, dear father, that the principles on account of which I, together with others, have been persecuted, and which with many of my fellow-sufferers may have been opinions taken on trust, or mere freaks of an ill-regulated imagination,—that these principles have been with me matters of conscience and the result of laborious thought and study. Hence there is in this country, where law alone governs, no more quiet citizen than I. I should have lost my self-respect and deserved the contempt of my enemies had I acted according to their principles.

"I would remark that since I became a citizen here I have publicly renounced, under oath, all further connection with foreign governments. Therefore I am as to Europe politically dead and continue to live only for my family. The hatred against the governments on the other side, which I brought on board ship, has changed into entire indifference; and I only wish that my persecutors would allow me the blessing of their forgetfulness."

In the summer of 1828 Follen entered the Unitarian ministry and for several years thereafter preached as a substitute in various churches in and around Boston. About this same time he made known to Dr. Bowditch, President of the Corporation, his intentions to seek a regular pastorate since his salary of five hundred dollars from the College was insufficient to maintain a home. Both Bowditch and Higginson strongly opposed this, assuring him that the College could not dispense with his services and that adequate provision would be made for him; accordingly he was given in addition to his regular work in German an instructorship in ethics and history in the Divinity School. He was induced to accept this offer, accord-

ing to his wife's statement,[1] from the assurance that a full professorship would soon be given him. This appointment imposed upon him the heavy task of instructing in two more subjects; but still he was able to work on his text-books, to continue his preaching, and to devote some time also to purely literary endeavor, contributing to various literary magazines such as the Christian Examiner and the American Quarterly Review.

From the year 1829 we possess a long letter[2] written to his father, giving an intimate view of his life at Harvard and breathing the contentment of one whose dreams of freedom seemed to have been realized, in which he makes the following observation: "You see by this, dear father, that I have not departed from your ways in regard to laboring in my profession. You must know that

> Im Klötzespalten werd' ich stets dir weichen;
> Im Sägen aber such' ich meinesgleichen.

I owe to this, my constant occupation, my firm health, and, as you see, a certain facility and skill in doggerel and double rhymes. For the rest I produce more realities here than poems,—probably because my boldest European poems are here realities." In this same letter he again speaks about his growing love for America, as follows: "I am so happy in the midst of my dear family. The time will come, I hope, when the governments on the other side will believe that I do not wish to meddle in their affairs, which concern me not at all; and then I shall hope, when they can promise me a safe protection, to find time to visit you. I pray you yet again, dear father, if it is too narrow for you there to come with my mother to me and to your American daughter. My income, though small, is sufficient for us. And then I root myself daily more deeply in this native soil of freedom and truth, and I am now as good as certain that I shall wish you joy,

[1] *Works,* I, 253; cf. Dr. Peabody's *Harvard Reminiscences,* 122.

[2] Follen-Briefe, No. 16, *Jahrbuch D. A. H. G.,* XIV, 42ff.; given in abridged form in *Works,* I, 263.

next April, over your first-born American grandson. The 18th of January is a festival for me. I become then a citizen of the United States."

In March, 1830, Follen was admitted to all the rights and privileges of an American citizen. How deeply this event, to which he had looked forward for five years, impressed him may be seen from the following account[1] of his wife: "He brought me the certificate, that he was an American citizen, with a glow of joy in his face and declared the naturalized foreigner alone had a right to boast of his citizenship, for with him it was choice. When not long afterwards, on the 11th of April, his son was born, he said: 'Now I am an American.' For a long time he had been unwilling to be called a foreigner. There was none of the feeling of the foreigner in his heart."

In the summer of the same year he learned that the professorship in ethics, which had been promised him, was to be given to Dr. John Palfrey in consequence of a reorganization of the Divinity School, whereupon he informed the Corporation that he would accept any advantageous position offered him elsewhere unless more suitable provisions were made for him in the College, since his four-fold occupation of preaching, and teaching in three different branches intellectually quartered him. Unwilling to lose so valuable an instructor from their teaching staff the Corporation thereupon offered him a professorship in the Department of Latin, but he declined the offer from the conviction that this was not his proper calling. Upon invitation from the Unitarian Society of Newburyport he supplied their pulpit during the summer vacation, receiving at the end of his engagement a proposal to become their permanent pastor, but at the same time he was notified by the Corporation that a professorship of German literature had been established at Harvard for a period of five years, and that he would be appointed to fill the position in case he cared to return. Although he preferred to devote himself to the field of ethics, or exclusively to the ministry,

[1] *Works*, I, 267.

he accepted the call from Harvard, believing that this new sphere of activity would give him an enlarged opportunity to contribute to the intellectual life of New England by opening up to it more effectively than had hitherto been done the treasures of German culture.

With this in view Follen now entered with great zeal into the teaching of German literature in the autumn of 1830. In addition to his regular academic instruction he gave public lectures also on German literature and philosophy in Boston, and accepted frequent invitations to preach in various churches. In the autumn of 1832 he was called upon to deliver the funeral oration [1] on Dr. Spurzheim, the celebrated German phrenologist, who had died in Boston while engaged on a lecturing tour in this country; and two years later he made before the workingmen of Boston an address [2] introductory to the fourth course of Franklin lectures. It was at this time also that he espoused the cause of antislavery, becoming one of the most active leaders in the Garrisonian Abolition movement. Concerning these years between 1830 and 1835 his wife notes [3] in her biography that it was his custom to work until after midnight, with the cradle of his infant son by his side. Many of his best lectures were written in this way; through all his various trials he had always been hopeful, but now his soul seemed overflowing with joy.[4] He felt certain that his professorship would be renewed at the end of the five years or that some other satisfactory position would be offered him. All his old love of academic life revived, and it was his one purpose and desire to be a truly useful servant to the institution in which he was employed. Not only his attachment to the university, but also his loyalty to his new country grew stronger as indicated by the follow-

[1] Given in full in *Works,* V, 153ff.

[2] Ibid., V, 288ff.

[3] *Works,* I, 301.

[4] In his *Harvard Reminiscences,* 122, Dr. Peabody remarks that the Follen home was at this time one of the first social centers in Harvard University life, and that the Harvard students regarded their frequent visits there as among the greatest of their social privileges.

ing passage of a letter[1] written to his father in May, 1832: "My attachment to this glorious country increases daily, although my love for my old fatherland does not grow cold. Many glorious productions flourish and increase in Europe, but man, who is there only a hot-house plant, finds here a native soil."

But Follen's hope of a permanent position of service and usefulness in Harvard was not to be realized. At the end of the period for which it had been endowed his professorship was discontinued, whereupon he severed his connection with the College and sought employment elsewhere. From this time on he was variously employed. At first he became private tutor to the two young sons of James Perkins, a position which for several reasons he resigned at the end of a year's successful service. In the summer of 1836 he and his family made a western journey with a number of friends including Miss Harriet Martineau, the distinguished English writer. The party intended to descend the Ohio river in order to visit Paul Follen's German colony in Missouri, but on account of the proslavery animosity against Miss Martineau this visit was abandoned; consequently the party took a more northerly route, traveling by way of Niagara falls and the great lakes as far as Chicago. In this city Follen was asked to address a small body of Unitarians, who were desirous of founding a church. His powerful preaching impressed them so well that they raised a subscription of twenty thousand dollars to build a meeting-house and extended to him an urgent invitation to become their pastor, which, however, he did not accept. After returning to Boston Follen took up his residence in Stockbridge where for want of other occupation he gave lessons in German, wrote for several literary magazines, and began also a treatise on psychology, a Science of the Soul as he called it,—a book which he had long wished to write and for which he had collected abundant material even before coming to America. From this time on he devoted all his leisure to this project, but death overtook him before the work

[1] *Works*, I, 300.

was completed; only the introductory chapters [1] were put into final form.

In the autumn of 1836 Follen was called to occupy the pulpit of the First Unitarian Church in New York City. This was the beginning of one of the most happy and active periods of his life. Besides his regular pastoral duties he still wrote for various journals, gave public lectures on literary, religious and sociological subjects, and continued his active service in the antislavery propaganda. For a time he was seriously considering the founding a new periodical to be called "All Sides," which was to be a non-partisan paper, a medium of independent thought, devoted to the spreading of the gospel of liberty. The plan [2] drawn up by him grouped the subjects to be treated under three heads: religion, morals and education, law and politics; but for want of financial support he was unable to carry out his project. The success with which he met in his pastorate caused him to believe that he had at last found his proper and most useful sphere of activity, but when after a year and a half of devoted service to the cause of religion and philanthropy in New York his congregation became displeased with his bold and fearless attitude toward the slavery question he resigned his position and returned with his family to Boston in the spring of 1838.

For the next two years, the remainder of his life, Follen managed through the strictest economy to eke out a living by dint of teaching private classes, giving public lectures, and filling various pulpits. His influential friend, Dr. Channing, seems to have been unable to help him to a suitable pastorate.[3] Under these discouraging circumstances his heart turned again with such longing toward the old home and the old friends across the sea that he made preparations in the summer of 1839 for a visit to Switzerland, but before final arrangements for the

[1] Given in *Works,* III, 323ff.

[2] Ibid., I, 634ff.

[3] Dr. Peabody says in his *Harvard Reminiscences,* 123, that Follen's zeal in the antislavery cause probably prevented his permanent settlement in one of the Boston churches in which he was a favorite preacher.

journey were made he received an invitation from the Unitarian Society of East Lexington to become their pastor. Although the salary was only six hundred dollars Follen accepted the offer and moved his family at once to his new parish where he designed and personally supervised the construction of a new house of worship. Again it seemed that his longing for a permanent field of useful service to his fellow-men was to be realized, but fate would not have it so. In response to a call to deliver a course of lectures on German literature before the Merchants' Library Association in New York, an invitation extended only to distinguished lecturers, Follen accompanied by his family went to that city the latter part of December. He had promised to return to Lexington in time for the dedication of the new church, which was set for the 15th of January, but a sudden indisposition of his wife while in New York rendered it inadvisable to make the return trip until a later date. Under these circumstances he requested that the dedication be postponed a few days until his wife would be able to make the journey. Since his parish would not make this concession he decided to leave his family in New York and to make the trip alone rather than to fail in the fulfillment of his promise. On the 13th of January, 1840, he boarded the steamboat, Lexington, for Boston; but on that dark winter night the steamer caught fire on Long Island Sound, and Karl Follen along with nearly all on board found a watery grave.

CHAPTER I.

HIS PROMOTION OF GERMAN STUDIES IN NEW ENGLAND.

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE.

That the higher intellectual life of the English settlers of this country was dependent chiefly upon the cultural traditions of the mother country seems natural despite the fact that England did practically nothing to promote it. The colonial colleges, especially those of New England, were not only modeled after the English plan, but the character of their methods of instruction was essentially that which prevailed at Oxford and Cambridge. Soon after the War of Independence we notice, however, a growing dissatisfaction with English cultural ideas. The most interesting proof of this is furnished by the plan[1] of a national university, devised by Dr. Benjamin Rush in 1788. This eminent scientist, who had traveled in Europe, advocates in his plan the founding of a federal institution to train the American youth, not along the traditional English lines, but in the branches of learning best calculated to prepare young men for all the private and public duties of American citizens. Among the subjects of instruction he names are: government, history, agriculture and commerce, natural philosophy, athletics, philosophy and foreign languages. These branches, he says, should be taught by way of lectures, which was of course the method employed in the German universities. Concerning philology and modern languages he expresses himself as follows: "Instruction in this branch of literature will become the more necessary in America, as our intercourse must soon cease with the bar, the stage, and the pulpits of Great Britain from whence we received our knowledge of the pronunciation of the English language. Even modern English books should cease to be the models of style in the United States. The German and French languages should be taught in this university. The many excellent books which are written in both these languages, upon all subjects, more especially upon those which relate to the advancement of national improvement of all kinds, will render a knowledge of them an essential part of the education of a legislator of the United States."

[1] *American Museum*, IV, 442ff. (1788).

It is not improbable that the ideas of Dr. Rush influenced Washington's later plan of a national university.

While neither of these plans was realized the idea of academic reform was taken up in the second and third decades of the 19th century, which marks a new era both in the material and spiritual history of the United States. This "era of good feeling" following the War of 1812 was characterized by an enlarged national consciousness and by a rapid increase in commerce and industry, culminating not only in great material prosperity, but also in a spontaneous outburst of a larger, freer, intellectual life. This showed itself in various ways, especially in the rising demand for a national literature. In his excellent "Remarks on National Literature," written in 1823, W. E. Channing not only denied the general assumption that English literature was sufficient, but insisted on the need of a national American literature and also of the best thought of Continental Europe in order to nurture it. "Our reading" he thinks,[1] "is confined too much to English books. . . . . In this we err. We ought to know the different modes of viewing and discussing great subjects in different nations. . . We fear, however, that at the present moment English books want much which we need. The intellect of that nation is turned now to what is called practical and useful subjects. . . We find little profound or fervid thinking expressed in the higher forms of its literature."

The center of culture which had hitherto been in Philadelphia and afterwards in New York now shifted to Boston. Through its constantly broadening mental horizon New England awoke to the consciousness that other nations besides England and France possessed standards and achievements worthy of emulation; hence it threw open its doors to the potent influence of German philosophy and literature. "The influences brought to bear on New England," says Barrett Wendell,[2] were almost innumerable. The most important was, probably, German thought at a time when German philosophy was most metaphysical and German literature most romantic."

[1] Channing's *Works*, 137.

[2] *Literary History of America*, 295f.

It is well known that the attention of New England was first called to Germany by Mme. de Staël's famous work, "De l'Allemagne," an English translation of which was published in New York in 1814. Through the author's statements [1] that all the North of Germany was filled with the most learned universities of Europe, that the literary glory of Germany depended upon these institutions, and that in no other country, not even in England, did the people have so many means of bringing their faculties to perfection, a wholly new world was opened up to New England. The many pertinent observations on German education made a deep impression upon young Americans, who in consequence decided to study at German universities. There can be no doubt that Mme. de Staël's book was a great factor in turning the tide of American students from England to the German seats of learning.

The first New England students who visited Germany were George Ticknor, Edward Everett, and George Bancroft. It is a most interesting fact that these pioneers of the new movement not only brought back with them an increased amount of knowledge and a new conception of culture and scholarship, but also the greatest enthusiasm for German educational ideas, which they now were eager to transplant upon American soil. This is shown by Ticknor's introduction of radical reforms at Harvard, of which Thomas W. Higginson could truly say: [2] "They laid the foundation of non-English training, not only in Boston, but in America, by taking the whole American educational system away from English traditions and substituting the German method." The influence of the German university idea as developed by W. von Humboldt, Fichte, and Schleiermacher is evident also in Edward Everett's address on the "Objects of a University Education." [3] How deeply George Bancroft was impressed with the German educational system may finally be seen by his founding of the

[1] Cf. Chapter VIII.

[2] *Atlantic Monthly*, LXXIX, 490.

[3] Everett's *Orations and Speeches*, II, 493ff.

Round Hill School[1] after the model of the German Gymnasium.

Finally there was, perhaps most potent of all, the direct influence of native Germans who, on account of political persecution, had been compelled to seek refuge in the new world. Many of these exiles sought positions as teachers in American schools and colleges, becoming in this way the early pioneers in spreading a knowledge of their literary, philosophical and educational ideals. Among those German scholars who first paved the way for an appreciation of German culture in this country were Karl Beck, Franz Lieber, and above all, Karl Follen.

When George Ticknor became professor of modern languages at Harvard in 1819 only French and Spanish were taught in his department, but thoroughly imbued with the German spirit he desired to add German also to the course of study. While on a visit to Washington in the spring of 1825 he chanced to make the acquaintance of Lafayette, who as has already been stated called his attention to Beck and Follen. Desirous of securing a teacher of German and believing, too, that a foreign language should be taught by a native, he secured the services of Follen, who thus became the first official instructor of German at Harvard College. When Follen began his instruction he found himself greatly hampered by the lack of suitable text-books. "There are two things," he writes[2] to his friend Beck, "on which I should like to have your opinion. I want a German Reader. Professor Ticknor is of the same opinion as I, that we two should make a German Chrestomathy, which might at the same time serve as a sketch of the history of German literature. Professor Ticknor possesses a very rich library. If we add to this what we might obtain in other places we might furnish something useful. Ask Mr. Bancroft for his opinion. The book must be such that it may be introduced into other institutions, and thus at least pay its expenses. The second point is a German Gram-

[1] Founded by Bancroft and Cogswell at Northampton, Mass., in 1823.

[2] *Works,* I, 160.

mar in English. The Grammar of Rowbotham seems to me more useful than that of Noehden, but even that is capable of great improvement, I know we have before this spoken of this subject, and you thought to prepare a Grammar. I know not whether you have done anything about it. At any rate note everything that occurs to you. I will do the same and communicate my observations to you."

To supply this first want Follen began at once to prepare a reader [1] for use in his classes. According to the preface the two-fold purpose of this book was to furnish the teacher with reading matter from recognized German masterpieces for the illustration of the rules and peculiarities of the language and to give the pupils a foretaste and some conception of classical German literature. As an introduction to the period from which the reading selections are taken the author gives in a nutshell an excellent sketch of the history of German literature, showing his intimate acquaintance with the subject and indicating at the same time the historical method which he pursued in his teaching. He divides German literature into three periods: the Mediaeval, the Reformation, and the Modern. He characterizes the first period as the romantic age from the fact that it produced a great mass of epics and lyrics whose chief content was faith, honor, and love, which gave them, in his opinion, their peculiar romantic stamp. The chief causes conducive of this golden age of the minnesong and epics of chivalry, he explains, were the influence of Provençal and ancient Scandinavian poetry, the institution of knighthood, and the encouragement of the art-loving Hohenstaufens. Through the breaking up of the feudal system the romantic spirit gradually degenerated during the 14th and 15th centuries into mere affectation and insipidity. In the 16th century, however, the revival of classical learning and the Reformation gave German culture a new direction. While the romantic age was characterized by products of creative genius, the protestant period was distinguished by the promotion of the exact sciences through thorough and unbiased investigation in theology, philosophy,

[1] *Deutsches Lesebuch für Anfänger,* Cambridge, 1826, pp. 252.

jurisprudence, and medicine; but although Luther's translation of the Bible was of the highest importance for the development of the German language, no poetry was produced that could vie with that of the middle ages. Gradually German literature degenerated into a weak imitation of the French through the influence of the Silesian Schools. In spite of the opposition of the Swiss School of critics the trend was further promoted by Gottsched until in the middle of the 18th century Lessing's keen and many-sided criticism finally shattered the idols of French taste, awakening that spirit of freedom and that aspiration for perfection which breathes through the masterpieces of modern German literature. Follen explains that Lessing accomplished for German literature what Luther did for the German Church. Just as Kant blazed a new way in philosophy, and the protestant spirit replaced protestant dogmatism, likewise appeared in the field of literature writers of independent spirit, who turned to antiquity for inspiration. The treasures of ancient Greek and German literature and art were now brought to light, becoming models for the best modern works, from which are taken the selections for this reader.

This attractive preface was well adapted to arouse the keenest interest of the student in this hitherto unexplored fairyland of German literature. The selections of the reader consist of about 150 pages of prose and 20 of poetry taken from about 20 of the most famous writers from Lessing to Körner. In his choice of material the author had naturally to choose comparatively simple pieces adapted to the needs of beginners rather than to present typical examples of the most finished literary productions, but at the same time he aimed especially to introduce his students into the spirit of German literature. This is shown clearly by the nature of the selections from both the classic and romantic writers of Germany. He begins with some of Lessing's early "Fabeln," which are followed by several of Krammacher's "Parabeln" and some of Herder's beautiful "Paramythien." Then Schiller is introduced with characteristic extracts from the "Geisterseher" and the "Abfall der Niederlande," Novalis with a significant passage from "Heinrich von Ofterdingen," and Wachenroder with

a chapter from the "Herzensergiessungen eines Kunstliebenden Klosterbruders." Goethe is represented by interesting fragments from his "Italienische Reise" and "Wilhelm Meister," Wieland by a chapter from his "Abderiten," Jean Paul by extracts from various novels, and A. W. Schlegel by a lecture on Shakespeare's "Macbeth." The specimens of German poetry in the second part of the book show an equally refined taste and comprehensive knowledge of German literature.

This reader was the first American school edition of German classics, hence a landmark in the early college curriculum. From this simple book, which was still used at Harvard during the sixties of the past century, many of the great leaders of American thought drew their inspiration for German literature and philosophy. It is doubtful whether a single one of the many German readers which have appeared since, and which have been constructed according to the latest "methods," can boast of similar results. Critical notices [1] from various liter-

[1] *U. S. Lit. Gazette,* Sept., 1826, 458: "Such an introduction to the study of the German language as is furnished by the work before us, was much needed. An acquaintance with this language is becoming daily more important to every man who wishes to keep pace with the progress of knowledge. In all its departments, German students are the most assiduous labourers, and, as a body, furnish the largest contributions to its stock. The literary treasures of this nation are vast, varied, and rapidly multiplying, and demand the attentive study of every one who desires to excel in any branch of intellectual labour. The metaphysician will find it the very home of profound speculation, the native land of intellectual, as truly as of physical gymnastics. For the lover of natural science, the patient research of the German character has accumulated a rich storehouse of facts. The classical scholar has been long familiar with its massy erudition, and, more lately, with its deep investigation into the spirit of antiquity. The professional man, the student of law, physic, or theology, may satisfy the keenest appetite with the fruits of German toil. The lover of belles lettres will here meet with a fresh and beautiful literature, formed by, and breathing the spirit of the age, exulting in the consciousness of vigour and progress, not made up of beautiful relics, but of the finished productions of modern art, equally splendid, and better suited to the wants and the taste of the times. Now, rich, and rapidly increasing, it opens a wide and important field to the scholar of every nation, more especially to nations of German origin. The English and their American descendants find in it much that is akin to their old modes of expression, of thought, and of feeling. Their domestic manners, language, and religion all tend to assimilate them with the German character, rather than with that of the South of Europe. The attentive study which the Germans have bestowed upon English literature, and the

ary magazines of the time indicate that it was considered a most valuable and acceptable book.

In the preface to the reader the author promises to supplement the collection, in case the book should find favor, by another containing pieces better adapted to advanced study. In 1833 there appeared in Cambridge a small volume [1] containing "Maria Stuart," "Tasso" and "Egmont" without any critical matter; it was printed by Charles Folsom, the university printer, and the "advertisement" merely states that the text is well adapted to follow Follen's "Lesebuch," and is designed for students of Harvard. This was the first of Schiller's and Goethe's dramas prepared for advanced classes in American schools. In view of the fact that Follen had promised something of this sort, and was also in this same year engaged in editing Carlyle's "Life of Schiller," it seems very probable that he was the compiler of this work also.

After completing his Reader Follen began at once the preparation of a German Grammar.[2] The preface of this work

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copious infusion of its spirit into their own, increase its interest to men whose taste has been formed upon the classics of England.

"Esteeming the literature of Germany, as we do, we are glad to see the study of it becoming more and more common among our countrymen. The book before us is valuable to beginners, supplying a deficiency which has been hitherto much felt, the want of a proper collection of reading-lessons. The few German books within the reach of the greater part of young students here, afford them little opportunity of selecting those most suited to their wants, or of learning the various powers of the language. They needed a work of this kind, consisting of extracts from distinguished authors, arranged according to their relative difficulty, and exhibiting speciments of their different merits."

North Am. Review, Jan., 1827, XXIV, 251: "This is one of the pleasantest and best selections we are acquainted with for the purpose of introducing the beginner to the knowledge of a foreign literature. This object is well attained; and although a task of no very formidable nature, yet it is one not unworthy of the attention of the learned scholar, who has prepared the book, and to whom we are indebted for contributing his efforts to increase the means of cultivating one of the most useful and important languages of the present day."

[1] Cf. *Americana Germanica,* New Series, III, No. 4, 125.

[2] *A Practical Grammar of the German Language* by Dr. Charles Follen, Instructor in the German language at Harvard College, Boston, 1828.

opens with a short discussion of the history and actual present state of the German language, followed by some general observations on the main German grammarians from Gottsched to Grimm. Gottsched's merits, he says, cannot be denied, but they are far surpassed by those of Adelung. Grimm's historical grammar is characterized as a profound inquiry into the general foundation of the language; the work of Harnisch as a metaphysical investigation abounding in deep ingenious remarks which sometimes run into a sort of philological mysticism; and that of Heinsius is valuable chiefly on account of its practical nature. The main body of the work is based upon the grammars [1] of Noehden and Rowbotham and is divided into three main parts: Elements, Syntax, and Prosody. The Elements are divided into orthography and parts of speech. In his classification of consonants Follen deviated from general usage by ranking *d, t, l* and *n* with the palatals and *r* with the linguals. In dealing with the parts of speech he begins with the article and treats successively nouns, adjectives, numerals, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, prepositions and conjunctions. Similar to Heinsius' scheme of declension, he groups the nouns into three classes: all feminines; all masculines having the genitive singular in *n* or *en;* and all masculines and neuters whose genitive singular ends in *s* (s, es, us, eus). In dealing with the verb the primary tenses, then the secondary, are treated; but instead of adopting the new term "weak" and "strong," as introduced by Grimm, those of "regular" and "irregular" are retained. The treatise on prosody, based for the most part on the opinions of Voss and Schlegel, was introduced "in order to contribute to the pleasure of those lovers of poetry," who were becoming interested more and more in the polite literature of Germany.

Although Follen was no philologian in the strict sense of the word he was familiar with the history of grammar in Germany and especially with the works of the Grimm brothers as

[1] These were the grammars commonly used in England and were derived from German grammars, especially that of Adelung. Follen characterizes them as weak in many respects, but endeavors to embody the most valuable parts of them in his own work.

indicated by his remarks [1] on the relationship between the German and English languages. His historical grasp of the subject eminently qualified him for a work of this kind. The grammar is, therefore, not only a thorough scientific treatise; but the fact that it passed through many revised editions [2] indicates also that it was extensively used. It was the first grammar of the German language [3] that came into general use in American schools, and in its day was considered one of the best in this country.

In the preface to the third edition of the grammar Follen speaks as follows about another text-book for the study of German: "I am now preparing for the press the Gospel of St. John in German, with a literal interlinear translation for beginners, on a plan somewhat different from the Hamiltonian method.[4] I hope that this book, together with the Grammar and Reader, will form a sufficient preparatory course to enable the faithful student to enter upon a thorough and extensive study of German literature." This book appeared in Boston in 1835 as indicated by a short notice in the American Quarterly Register,[5] which speaks of it as "a welcome present to all beginners in the German language."

Concerning this first attempt to introduce German instruction into Harvard Dr. A. P. Peabody gives the following interesting account:[6] "German had never been taught in Harvard College before; and it was with no little difficulty that a volunteer class of eight was found desirous, or at least willing, to

[1] Cf. Inaugural Address, *Works,* V.

[2] A comparison of the first three editions shows that the revisions consist of expansions and additions, contractions and omissions, and different arrangement of material, but these changes affected rather the manner of presentation than the material itself. Each had approximately 280 pages. The 21st revised edition appeared in Boston in 1859.

[3] The first German grammar in English in America was a reprint of the London edition of Bachmair's grammar, Phila., 1772. *A German Grammar* appeared also in Phila., 1788. Cf. Circular of Infor., No. 3, 106, U. S. Bureau of Ed., 1913.

[4] For an account of this new method, cf. *Westminster Review,* 1829, X, 284ff.

[5] Vol. IX, 77.

[6] *Harvard Reminiscences,* 117ff.

avail themselves of his (Follen's) services. I was one of that class. We were looked upon with very much the amazement with which a class in some obscure tribal dialect of the remotest Orient would be now regarded. We knew of but two or three persons in New England who could read German; though there were probably many more of whom we did not know. There were no German books in the book-stores. A friend gave me a copy of Schiller's "Wallenstein," which I read as soon as I was able to do so, and then passed it from hand to hand among those who could obtain nothing else to read. There was no attainable class-book that could be used as a Reader. A few copies of Noehden's Grammar were imported, and a few copies I forget of whose Pocket Dictionary, fortunately too copious for an Anglo-Saxon pocket, and suggesting the generous amplitude of the Low Dutch costume, as described in Irving's mythical 'History of New York.' The German Reader for Beginners, compiled by our teacher, was furnished to the class in single sheets as it was needed, and was printed in Roman type, there being no German type within easy reach.[1] There could not have been a happier introduction to German literature than this little volume. It contained choice extracts in prose, all from writers that still hold an unchallenged place in the hierarchy of genius, and poems from Schiller, Goethe, Herder, and several poets of kindred, if inferior, fame. But in the entire volume Dr. Follen rejoiced especially in several battle-pieces from Körner, the soldier and martyr of liberty, whom we then supposed to be our teacher's fellow-soldier, though, in fact, he fell in battle when Dr. Follen was just entering the University. I never have heard recitations which have inspired me so strongly as the reading of these pieces by Dr. Follen, who would put into them all of the heart and soul that had made him too much a lover of his country to be suffered to dwell in it. He appended to the other poems in the first edition of the Reader, anonymously, a death song[2] in memory of Körner, which we all

[1] A second edition in German type was printed in 1831.

[2] This elegy was first published in the *Freye Stimmen,* No. 36. Follen considered this poem as one of his best productions.

knew to be his own, and which we read so often and so feelingly that it sank indelibly into permanent memory; and I find that after an interval of sixty years it is as fresh in my recollection as the hymns that I learned in my childhood.

"Dr. Follen was the best of teachers. Under him we learned the grammar of the language, in great part, *in situ,*—forms and constructions, except the most elementary, being explained to us as we met them in our reading lessons, and explained with a clearness and emphasis that made it hard to forget them. At the same time he pointed out all that was specially noteworthy in our lessons, and gave us, in English much better than ours, his own translations of passages of peculiar interest or beauty. He bestowed great pains in bringing our untried organs into use in the more difficult details of pronunciation, particularly in the o, the u, the r, and the ch, on which he took us each separately in hand."

In regard to the library facilities for work in German at that time there are many conflicting statements. In 1817 Harvard possessed scarcely 20,000 volumes all told. In that year Edward Everett brought from Germany a number of books which laid the foundation of a German library. To these were added about the same time a large number of scientific works on American geography and history, purchased by Mr. I. Thorndike from Prof. Ebeling's library [1] in Hamburg, and this collection was increased in 1819 by a thirty-volume set of Goethe's works.[2] It is quite probable, however, that no literary works besides Goethe's were accessible to the public, hence we may conclude that Peabody's statement represents pretty nearly the true status of affairs. Ticknor's private

[1] Cf. *American Monthly Review,* March, 1832.

[2] These books were presented to the library by Goethe himself. The gift was accompanied by a letter now extant only in translation, as follows: "The above poetical and scientific works are presented to the library of the university of Cambridge in New England as a mark of deep interest in its high literary character and in the successful zeal it has displayed through so long a course of years for the promotion of solid and elegant learning." Cf. Viereck, *Report of Com. of Ed.,* 1907, 552.

library contained a good collection of German books according to one of Follen's letters to Beck.[1] The coming of Follen to Harvard did much to increase enthusiasm for things German[2] and from this time on the number of German books increased rapidly in Boston. According to its Catalogue the Boston Athenæum already possessed in 1827 a few translations from such writers as Goethe, Schiller, Herder, and the Schlegels. To these were added at this time the works in the original of Goethe, Schiller, Herder, Lessing, Jacobi, Wieland, Novalis, Tieck, Uhland, Richter, A. W. and Fr. Schlegel. By 1831 the Harvard library contained in addition to the works above named those of Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Schleiermacher.

That Follen at once made a good impression at Harvard is attested by Professor Ticknor, who wrote to a friend in 1826 as follows:[3] "Our German teacher, Dr. Follen, a young man who left his country for political reasons, is a fine fellow, an excellent scholar, and teaches German admirably. He is a modest, thorough, faithful German scholar, who will do good among us and be worth your knowing." Follen possessed the rare gift of winning the love and esteem of all who came into his presence. The powerful influence which he exerted upon his friends was due as much to the magic of his personality as to his broad scholarship;; and he accomplished as much for his pupils through the enthusiasm and inspiration which he aroused in them as through the knowledge which he imparted. These qualities made him one of the most popular and successful teachers at Harvard. From the very outset he was admitted into the circle of Boston's most distinguished men and women, and was always a welcome guest at their social gatherings, reading circles, and educational meetings. Numerous entries in the diary[4] which he kept for a few months during the winter of 1827-'28, show that the conversation of these gatherings often turned to topics of German art, literature, and

[1] *Works,* I, 161.

[2] Cf. Miss Peabody's *Reminiscences of Channing,* 339.

[3] *Life, Letters and Journal,* I, 351.

[4] *Works,* I, 182ff.

philosophy,—subjects in which he became a guide and interpreter to Boston's intellectual circles at a time when the study and appreciation of German culture was beginning to be awakened in New England. For example, at one of these meetings he spent the evening discussing with his friends the history and character of German art and literature in general. Several evenings he entertained the company by reading and explaining portions of Gower's translation of "Faust," thus arousing their interest in the study of Goethe. So effective was his reading and interpretation that his delighted audience had to admit that none but Shakespeare had written with the power displayed by the great German. On other occasions he gave descriptions of German student life and discussed the works of such writers as Herder, Kant, and Jean Paul. By means of correspondence with some of the most scholarly men of the country Follen was able to enlarge the sphere of his influence in extending a knowledge of German culture to still wider circles. With J. Q. Adams, who was a connoisseur and admirer of German literature, he carried on an intimate correspondence, in which he acted in the capacity of guide and critic, answering many questions and giving much information in general pertaining to German writers. To Mr. Tracy, the translator of Fouque's "Undine" he gave encouragement and much practical assistance not only through his critical annotations of the text, but also by his explanation of many obscure allusions and difficult passages.

Follen not only acted as interpreter of German literature, but had many valuable ideas also concerning German educational methods. Miss Elizabeth Peabody, who was at that time a teacher in Boston and later became the pioneer of the Kindergarten movement in this country, profited greatly no doubt by her conversations with him on educational matters. She relates [1] that in the autumn of 1827 began a series of informal meetings, sometimes at Dr. Channing's and sometimes at the home of Jonathan Phillips, for discussing the general subject of the education of children. Among those who at-

[1] *Reminiscences of Channing,* 250.

tended the meetings were Dr. and Mrs. Channing, Mr. Phillips, Dr. Follen, the two Peabody sisters, and occasionally Mr. G. F. Thayer and Mr. Wm. Russell, editor of the Journal of Education. The conversation ranged over every department of education, inquiring into the comparative study of languages, ancient and modern, and into science, history, fiction, and poetry as means of education. Miss Peabody adds that three minds so harmoniously yet so utterly different in their discipline, so entirely self-determined and so independent as Channing's, Follen's, and Phillips' made these discussions very rich. Miss Peabody relates further [1] that in all educational discussions Follen earnestly maintained that the child should be handled not with reference to his future, but to his present perfection; that the father of the man is the perfect *child* in the balance of childish beauty, and not the child prematurely developed into a man; that education which does the latter both destroys the child and dwarfs the man. Froebel's principles were thus suggested, says Miss Peabody, and one of the questions discussed among them was how to employ in their childish pleasures the faculties, mechanical, imaginative, and scientific without taking the children out of the child-life of love and joy.

According to Miss Peabody,[2] Follen as well as Channing and Phillips advocated the development of the child's faculties for personal investigation, whether in nature or in language, before burdening the memory with other men's words. All three aimed at moral and intellectual freedom. Channing argued [3] for the study of the ancient languages on the ground that language is the first creation of the human mind and, if taught by what he called the reasonable method, that is, by comparing the new idiom with the vernacular as is done in translating, with which he thought language study should begin, puts the mind into possession of itself. Follen on the other hand, who had his fill of Greek and Latin in his German

[1] Ibid., 256.

[2] Ibid., 264.

[3] Ibid., 251.

education, did not deny the value of the classic languages, but advocated [1] the study of them in a later stage of education. He maintained that the study of the mother tongue together with the colloquial use of modern languages, especially of the German, which is so homogeneous and vegetative in its formations, could be so alternated with the study of nature as to secure the liberalizing end sought; accordingly he advocated strongly the study of the natural sciences in early education, and described the process of mind in its investigation of natural objects, which he thought involved a still greater play of the imagination than language-study, leading to direct knowledge of the Infinite Mind, that states itself purely as laws of nature, while language phenomena are so largely exponents of the disorderly play of the human faculties. He believed that the universal attraction of the young mind to the analysis of natural objects, and the health of the body incidental to studying them, not in scientific treatises but in living nature, suggests that the early part of a child's education should be of this cast rather than the other.

The foregoing will serve to show how thus early Follen was advocating the new German methods of education as originated by Pestalozzi and developed by Froebel. When writing her Reminiscences in 1877, Miss Peabody observes [2] that everything she heard about what was called the New Education only recalled Follen's discussions of these same methods a half century earlier.

As instructor at Harvard Follen was required to teach six hours per day three days in the week. That his efforts and influence were beginning to bear fruit is shown by a letter [3] written to his father in 1829: "The study of the German language and literature is steadily increasing. Many young Americans, particularly theological students, who have finished their studies here, are travelling in Germany, in order to begin there anew and then to make the dead riches of German learn-

[1] Ibid., 257ff.

[2] *Reminiscences of Channing,* 257.

[3] *Works,* I, 265.

ing live here anew in this free air." During the five years of his instructorship he had been laying the foundation for the larger program which he hoped to carry out as soon as the soil should be sufficiently prepared. So diligently had he labored to arouse an interest in German that by 1830 an average of about sixty students, a quarter of the total number enrolled in the college, were attending his classes each year, German books in native type were issuing from the university press, German works were being added constantly to the public and private libraries, German books and teachers of German were to be found in nearly every important town in New England.[1] In Boston a number of people were already able to speak the language and many more could read it. As a result the treasures of German literature were rapidly gaining intelligent interest and universal acceptance.

During this period there existed also at Harvard a German Society organized by a number of the scholarly men of Cambridge and Boston, presumably for the purpose of acquiring and imparting a broader knowledge of things German than had hitherto been possible. It seems that the only available information concerning this organization is to be found on the paper covers of an old German book[2] printed in 1829. On the one cover of this book is pasted a printed list of by-laws governing the association, and on the other another printed sheet with the heading, "German Society, 1828," following by this list of names: C. Follen, S. A. Eliot, G. Ticknor, S. H. Perkins, Wm. T. Andrews, F. C. Gray, J. Pickering, N. S. Bowditch, E. Wiggelsworth, F. Lieber, Mr. Miesegalo, T. Searle, J. M. Robinson. From the fact that the list of original members is headed by Follen it may be safely assumed that he was the guiding spirit of the Society.

In 1830 a full professorship of the German language and literature was established at Harvard, and through the generosity of Follen's friends, Mr. Cabot, Colonel Perkins and Mr. J. Phillips, it was endowed for a period of five years,

[1] *Works,* V, 132.

[2] Discovered a few years ago among a lot of old books in a Boston book store by L. L. Mackall; cf. *Harvard Graduate Magazine,* XI, 492.

with the understanding[1] that it should be continued by the Corporation at the end of that time in case public sentiment favored it. This afforded Follen his long coveted opportunity to put into operation his larger plans for the promoting of German studies in America. In the autumn of 1831 he was formally inaugurated into his new position, and the message which he proclaimed in his address on German literature, delivered on this occasion, was of such vital importance and far-reaching influence that it not only aroused the keenest interest of the learned men of the country, but called forth most favorable comment from some of the best literary journals of the day, and highly complimentary letters from such men as J. Q. Adams and Edward Livingston, James Marsh and others.

This address is not only a lucid and correct interpretation of the German spirit, but it contains also the program of German study in America, which remains essentially the same today after the lapse of almost a century. Follen's chief aim is to emphasize the importance of the study of the German language and literature and to acquaint the American student with those German authors who seem best fitted to excite their attention and to reward it by their enlightening and inspiring influence. At the outset he points out the essential difference between the French and German genius as manifested in the literary productions in the last half of the 18th century: in the French an immoderate respect for finish, neatness and ease, with an excessive abhorrence for all inelegance, unrefined simplicity, obscurity, and mystery,—in short, a certain worship of the outside of things; in the German a comparative indifference to finite and external things, but an all-absorbing interest in the boundlessness of every intellectual pursuit and a tendency to embody the grave, profound, and sublime in unfinished, obscure, or indefinite forms. The degeneracy of German literature in the 17th and first half of the 18th century, which had been brought about by a slavish imitation of French taste and manners, was the main cause of the French

[1] *Works,* I, 344.

contempt for German works prior to the 19th century, but through the influence of Mme. de Staël's book on Germany France was aroused from a vain idolatry of its own greatness to an enlarged conception and appreciation of foreign merit; and from an object of common disregard German literature and philosophy began to gain general interest and esteem in that country. Through the translation of poor works, such as the plays of Kotzebue, and poor translations of good works, the eye of English criticism also had been blinded to the true character of the poetic literature of Germany. Just as a profusion of heavy or overwrought ornament in the parts, with a lack of simplicity in the conception of the whole, was wrongly supposed to be the characteristics of Gothic architecture, likewise were works characterized by an extravagant sentiment and diction, by a visionary philosophy or an accumulation of useless details, pointed out as specimens of German literary style and taste; but through better translations these first unfavorable impressions were gradually corrected until German literature and philosophy gained faithful and impartial study in England.

After this general introduction Follen discusses some of the special branches of learning cultivated by the German scholars, beginning with a short characterization of German philosophy and theology. Among the other sciences that have received special attention he mentions mathematics, astronomy, medicine, law, and history. In jurisprudence, as he points out, untiring historical research has been made by such jurists as Hugo and Savigny; the knowledge of civil law vastly promoted by Niebur's discovery of the ancient Roman commentaries of Caius; and great progress made in the study of penal legislation and of the nature and punishment of crime. The works of Grotius on international law and his doctrine of the natural rights of man, a science advanced successively by Pufendorf, Thomasius, Kant, and Fichte, were a most valuable contribution to this department of learning. In the domain of history, too, literary Germany deserves the highest praise. Niebur's monumental work on ancient Rome is the greatest of its kind; while the works of J. von Müller

and of Heering are in universal use as college text-books. German editions of the classic literature of Greece and Rome, together with dictionaries, grammars and commentaries are found wherever the ancient classics are studied. Ancient literature has found its most faithful interpreters in Germany; and everything from the smallest details to the sublimest ideas embodied in its greatest works has been searched out by the matchless perseverance and critical acumen of German philologists.

But the most national of all her intellectual products,—the one which every native must fondly cherish, is the poetic literature of Germany. This is divided into two golden ages, designated as the mediæval and the modern. Among the first fruits of the early German muse were the great epics and lyrics of the middle ages: The Song of the Nibelungen is an epic inferior to the Iliad in poetic finish, but superior to it in the great design of the whole; the heroic character of the chivalrous Burgundians in unequal contest with Attila's hosts, and the tragic conflict between courage, truth, honor, fidelity, and the powers of darkness are portrayed with a dramatic energy equaled only by Shakespeare. The love lyrics of the knightly minnesingers are a beautiful tribute to the divine and prophetic element which Tacitus said the ancient Germans recognized in the soul of woman. The theme of this poetry is that reverence for womanly excellence, which is designated as one of the finest traits of the German national character. It seeks to represent the beau ideal of womanhood in all its simple grace and nature, surrounded by all the romantic glamor with which the spirit of chivalry loved to adorn the object of its affection. This early period of especial achievement was followed by centuries of decadence; but the liberation of man's higher interests from the tyranny of presumptious self-constituted authority in the 16th century and the revival of classical learning in the 17th combined to awaken a new intellectual life from which arose in the 18th century the modern period of German literature. Through the independent genius of Lessing this young national literature was freed from its self-imposed bondage to foreign taste and man-

ners, not in order to exchange it for a vain self-complacency in exalting the peculiarities of German life and character, but to get wisdom from every teacher, foreign or native, ancient or modern; from reason and passion, prudence and enthusiasm;—to learn from all, but to imitate none; and through the pursuit of such ideals by such illustrious men as Lessing, Klopstock, Wieland, Herder, Goethe and Schiller was ushered in the second golden age of German poetry.

After setting forth these main excellences which entitle German literature to the perusal and general attention of Americans, Follen concludes his discourse with some special reasons why the study of the German language and literature is of the greatest importance to the English-speaking race: In the first place the ancient German language is the mother of the English. Innumerable words and modes of expression in which a nation signifies its first, simplest, and deepest conceptions and wants,—those home-words, which constitute alike the elements of every-day conversation and the language of poetry, remain to this day essentially the same in both languages and show that the ancestors of both nations must have been united, not merely under the same military leader, but in daily life, under the same roof, at the same fireside. Then, too, the treasures of folk-lore, such as the wonders of Red Riding Hood and Cinderella, handed down for centuries from mother to child, lead the American child as well as the English back to the old Saxon nursery in the German fatherland; and many proverbs and golden sayings, the good old family furniture and family jewels of the nation, are still used widely enough to remind all whose mother-tongue is either English or German of the common ancestors from whom they are inherited. There is a relationship not only between the languages and literatures of these nations but also in the very mode of perceiving and feeling them; hence those of English education are better prepared than any other foreigners to understand and enjoy the strength and beauty of the German classics; and the further they advance the more they can perceive that the study of German is valuable as an aid to a more comprehensive understanding of their own language and lit-

erature. Through their profound understanding of Shakespeare and through the flexibility and copious vocabulary of their language, which has words for the most various shades of thought and feeling, the Germans have been able to make such a perfect translation of his dramas that he has become to them, as it were, a native poet,—a fact sufficient in itself to show that those works which come from English genius find also in Germany a kindred mind and an understanding heart.

Such was the message of the German spirit which Follen brought to the students of Harvard; such was the wealth of German culture which he hoped to make accessible to the American public through his professorial position. By means of his address, which was published and sent in various directions, he not only opened the public eye to the treasures of one of the greatest literatures of modern Europe, but at the same time sought to dispel some of the delusions concerning it which were current in academic circles. In a clear and convincing manner he exonerated German philosophy from the charge of obscure reasoning and irreverent tendencies, and German theology from the charge of skepticism. In like manner he not only corrected the erroneous idea that the German language is especially difficult and that German poetry is given to mysticism, wild rhapsody and empty bombast, but gave positive reasons why these are in their very nature of permanent interest to those whose mother-tongue is English and why their study is of the highest cultural value.

From this time on Follen gave in addition to his instruction in the language a regular course of lectures on German literature, which was well attended and highly appreciated by the students of Harvard. In order to bring his message to a still wider public he wrote a series of lectures on the life and works of Schiller, which he delivered in Boston during the winter of 1831-'32 and again a few years later upon two occasions to a large, appreciative audience in New York. Prior to 1817 Schiller was known in America mainly through mutilated translations of his early dramas, especially "The Robbers"; and the mere fact that he wrote for the stage was

in itself sufficient to condemn him in the opinion of puritanical New England where the theater was regarded almost as an institution of the devil. Even as late as 1834 the American Quarterly Observer [1] lamented the fact that a man of Schiller's great talent had "devoted all his powers to an amusement which is at war with good taste and good morals," and asserted that a man to whose desires and feelings the scriptural expression "beauty of holiness" [2] could be applied would not have dedicated the greater part of his life to adorn and dignify the stage. In the same year so eminent a scholar as F. H. Hedge regretted [3] "that a writer of Schiller's standing in this age of the world should have devoted the principal part of his life to a department of art so questionable in its tendency and so surely destined to decay as the drama." But after the return of the Göttingen men [4] the North American Review and several other prominent magazines threw the weight of their influence on the side of German literature and from that time on Schiller began to grow in favor and to receive intelligent appreciation by our most scholarly men.

In 1833 the first American reprint of Carlyle's "Life of Schiller" appeared in Boston, with a general preface by Park Benjamin and an introduction by Professor Follen. This book along with the excellent reviews which it called forth gave Schiller an assured standing in America. Although the editors and reviewers note the unusual ability of the English biographer they do not mention Carlyle by name,—a fact which seems to indicate, strangely enough, that they were uncertain at least concerning the authorship of the distinguished work.[5] In view of the fact that Carlyle's book met with little success in Germany at the time and that its value has been

[1] II, 173f.

[2] An experession applied to Schiller's morality by Follen.

[3] *Christian Examiner,* XVI, 391.

[4] The first American students who entered the University of Göttingen.

[5] Cf. *North American Review,* Vol. 39 (New Series, Vol. 30), p. 1ff., July, 1834.

appreciated by German scholars only of late, it is all the more significant that Follen should have been one of the first to recognize its importance.[1] With keen critical insight Follen praises the work as a biography in the true sense of the word; not merely a recital of events or a description of the peculiarities and gradual unfolding of Schiller's character, but chiefly a critical analysis of his works, in which the main part of such a life consists. He points out further that the English biographer not only possesses that philosophic universality of perception and interest, which is necessary for a just estimation of foreign merit, but that he has also a peculiar aptness for appreciating the characteristic excellence of Schiller. By a comparison with the original Follen points out several misinterpretations and incorrect translations in the English edition and corrects them in the American reprint. He characterizes the work, on the whole as one of the best specimens of English criticism. These pertinent remarks by Follen, who was considered by his contemporaries as the best authority on German literature in this country, elicited favorable editorial comment from the literary magazines and aroused general interest in this anonymous work on Schiller.

The most valuable part of this introduction is Follen's deeply appreciative characterization of Schiller's poetry, which is important enough to be quoted here in full: "Schiller's poetry is distinguished by its moral character. But its morality is not that of the philosopher who insists on an entire separation of the moral principle from all natural desires; nor that of the theologian who maintains that holiness consists in denying and crucifying the natural affections. It is a morality that flows from the heart freely and bountifully, receiving and merging in its wide and deep channel all natural desires and affections. It is the morality of nature, the beauty of holiness, the quickening spirit of love and happiness; which breathes in all his works and sheds a saint-like glory upon his life and sufferings. His whole life was spent in communing with the Spirit of Truth that had revealed itself to him in the bright raiment of poetry, and in delivering to his

[1] Cf. Albert Ludwig, *Schiller und die deutsche Nachwelt,* 185ff.

countrymen his poetic mission. At a time when patriotic enthusiasm and poet-worship had extolled his merit above what is attained by mere human effort, he alone seemed ignorant of the eminence upon which he stood because he measured his attainments not by what lay behind him and below but by what he saw before him and above. Of him whose image found an altar in every heart, of him it may well be said that while all rejoiced in the light of his countenace he himself 'wist not that his face shone.' "

The only portion of Follen's lectures on German literature preserved complete is that relating to Schiller. Although a few copies of Carlyle's work had probably been imported before 1832, it was Follen who gave the first comprehensive account of Schiller's life and works to any considerable number of Americans. These lectures open with an interesting biographical sketch followed by a detailed account of each of the nine complete dramas, interspersed with translations of representative passages along with a running commentary on the same. Through his broad knowledge of men and his deep insight into human nature Follen was able to present in the main an accurate and appreciative analysis of Schiller's chief dramatic characters; and for the most part his critical observations differ from those of Carlyle only in a few minor details.

Since it is mainly through the "Robbers" that Schiller was known to the American public, and chiefly by the crudities of this play that his character as a poet was judged, Follen entered into a thorough discussion of this drama. He saw in this first dramatic production of Schiller all the moral and spiritual elements of the author's character, especially his reverence for religion, truth and freedom, which are exhibited here as coming in conflict not only with the decrees of fate, as in the ancient drama, but rather with the unnatural institutions of society, the authority of priests and princes, customs and fashions,—in short, with the united despotism of the sword, the pen, and the money-bag. Follen had a deeply sympathetic appreciation of this tragic conflict, for he, too, like the main character, Karl Moor, had suffered from his over-

zealous attempt to promote the welfare of society. He thought that not only the enemies but also the friends which Schiller gained by his bold attack upon tyranny frequently overlooked what he calls the "sublime moral" of the play,—the tragic results that accrue to him who of his own free will cannot yield obedience to the moral law. This was the very struggle through which Follen himself had passed, and it was his victory over self that had saved him from the fate that overtook Karl Moor.

As a student of psychology and ethics Follen was deeply interested also in the character of Franz Moor. Schlegel calls Franz a mere copy of Richard III. without any of those ennobling qualities which arouse both abhorrence and admiration for the latter; and Carlyle also characterizes him as an amplified but distorted image of Iago and Richard without the least air of reality. Follen on the other hand sees in Franz "a villain of an original and highly interesting cast." By a careful comparison of Franz and Richard he shows that the points of difference between them are of more importance than the resemblances and that "although there exists between them a certain family likeness, yet they differ essentially in those nice features of dramatic portraiture which constitute the individuality of the picture." Follen denies that Richard possesses any ennobling traits except great ingenuity and astonishing bravery. Franz, he asserts, possesses also these qualities, "but his bravery is displayed in another field; his heroism and tactics are exhibited in fighting the enemy within, sometimes by boldly giving battle, sometimes by wisely avoiding it." As for the air of reality Follen does not claim that "such a beau-ideal of an atheist-tyrant is to be found in reality, chiefly perhaps because the restraints of society prevent men of this disposition from acting out their whole nature; but all the elements of such a character certainly exist among men and the disjecta membra of this monster may be easily pointed out, from which the poet has formed one self-consistent individual." To Carlyle's criticism that "so reflective a miscreant as Franz could not exist because his calculations would lead him to honesty, if merely because it was the best policy," Follen

replies that "the philosophy of Franz is not employed, like that of Paley, in finding what sort of enjoyment will in the long run afford the greatest pleasure and in choosing, accordingly, the means to the end sought; it has nothing to do with the ends of existence, but simply with the infinite variety of means. The great end and aim of all his action is set, not by his reasoning powers, but by the uncontrolled impulse of his sensual nature, which craves absolute dominion. The end being given his mind delights in overlooking the whole range of means and in choosing them, good or bad, according to his desires,"—an excellent characterization of the villain Franz Moor.

By this careful analysis and criticism of the play Follen aims to show that in spite of the youthful excesses of an exuberant and unbridled fancy this drama contains all the nobler elements of human nature, and that "the author's design is to indicate that even the most ardent love of justice and freedom and heroic resistance to every kind of oppression must lead to error and crime if it does not induce us first to dethrone the selfish passions and establish the perfect law of liberty in our own souls." He points out further that this play is merely the first fruit of a youthful dramatic genius; that its originality and power is only a crude indication of what is to follow in Schiller's mature works of art.

In like manner Follen treats the remainder of Schiller's dramas, making many original and highly pertinent observations and occasionally taking issue with the criticisms of Schlegel and Carlyle.

The last lecture is devoted to a brief sketch of Schiller's dramatic fragments, followed by a short account of Goethe's literary activity and closing with a general characterization of Schiller's poetic nature. In this delineation Follen begins with Goethe's well-known expression that "Schiller preached the gospel of freedom," explaining that the word freedom is to be taken in the sense of Kant's philosophy, as synonymous with the moral nature of man. He explains that Schiller's enthusiasm for freedom is the living spring and the life-blood of all his poetry; that in the dramas of his Storm and Stress period,

which may be called the heroic age of his literary activity, this spirit appears in the form of a Hercules going about to free the earth from tyrants and monsters; that it is the instinct of liberty warring against the tyranny of circumstances and arbitrary institutions. This love of liberty, Follen adds, is with Schiller not a negative or destructive principle, but a striving after freedom from oppression,—from all kinds of unnatural and unreasonable restraints so that the spiritual principle of human nature may unfold itself fully in the individual and in society; it is only a manifestation of his pure delight in perfection, his love of nature, of man, and of God. Schiller loved nature for herself in all her various shapes and moods, but he loved best those things in nature which call forth most effectively the energies, the strong and tender emotions and high aspirations of the soul; all that reminds man of his high destiny and that aids him to attain it. His dramas are, therefore, as Follen conceives them, a revelation of moral beauty; a revelation of his faith that man alone is able to form his own character, and capable of infinite advancement. Since the moral freedom of man is the native soil of Schiller's poetry, as Follen concludes, every good principle loves to grow in it, and for this very reason it does not appear as a forced product of rigid self-control, but as springing up from the abundance of the heart with ideal beauty.

These lectures on Schiller, published in 1841, supplemented the good work which the North American Review had begun. Carlyle's book was adapted rather to the needs of the student, and the pro-German magazines educated the academic public to the point where it would understand and appreciate this work; but Follen's lectures appealed also to the layman and were designed to make Schiller's name popular among the people; hence it is safe to say that with the exception of Carlyle Follen did more than any other critic to introduce and interpret Schiller to the American public.[1] To those stupid

[1] In his excellent monograph *Schiller und die deutsche Nachwelt,* Albert Ludwig says: "We must not forget that Karl Follen, the man who as no other won the hearts of his fellow students through the magic power of his personality, became in his new home beyond the sea an enthusiastic prophet of our national poet by means of his lectures and addresses."

criticisms against Schiller's devotion to the dramatic art Follen replied in Schiller's own words,[1] that the stage is an infallible key to the secret recesses of the human heart, hence the only place where one can hear what one rarely or never hears—truth, and see what one rarely or never sees—man. "The theater is," he maintains, "a school of practical wisdom, a moral institution, hence one of the most powerful instruments to elevate and refine the character of a nation."

PHILOSOPHY.

As professor of German literature Follen desired to promote the study of German philosophy also, which he, as a representative of contemporary German Idealism, considered "the system of fundamental and regulative principles of all the various branches of learning and knowledge, a department in which German literature is especially rich." [2] Soon after his arrival at Harvard he began to discuss [3] with Channing and other intellectual leaders of Boston German philosophical thought, about which little was then known in New England.

In the autumn of 1828, he was elected to an instructorship in ethics and ecclesiastical history in the Harvard Divinity School, and began at once a systematic course of instruction in those subjects.[4] Ethics was a branch of learning in which he was especially interested and all his early training had fitted him for such a position. His biographer says [5] that his method of instruction was to give his class a subject, upon which each member was to write his views and then hand them in for him to criticise. After carefully reading these themes and pointing out to the writer all that he found ob-

[1] Cf. *Die Schaubühne als eine moralische Anstalt betrachtet,* Säkular-Ausgabe, XI, 89ff.

[2] *Works,* V, 134.

[3] Cf. Diary, *Works,* I, 182ff.

[4] In his *Harvard Reminiscences,* 123, Peabody says that "Follen's lectures were of unsurpassed excellence both on the score of scientific knowledge of the ground which they covered, and for the elevated tone of feeling which pervaded them."

[5] *Works,* I, 260.

jectionable in style, reasoning, or judgment, as well as freely praising all that he found excellent, he took up the subject himself and treated it in the most comprehensive and masterly manner that he was capable of. In giving his own views he was always careful to avoid dogmatism and to show that on those great questions he considered himself still a learner with his pupils. According to a letter [1] to his parents in August, 1829, he lectured on history in the College and on ethics in the Theological School three days in the week. Friday evenings he had an exercise with the theological students in extempore preaching, and on Saturdays and Sunday evenings attended with the other members of the theological faculty the regular exercise in preaching. Each of the theological students of the two upper classes preached in turn and after the service each member of the faculty made his remarks upon the exercises, which he, as the youngest of the faculty, had to begin.

Follen desired to devote his whole time to the field of ethics, but when Dr. Palfrey was made professor of that branch in the autumn of 1830 Follen resigned his instructorship in the Divinity School and gave his whole attention to the duties of his professorship of German literature. Desirous, however, of contributing further to a general knowledge of German philosophy he prepared a series of popular lectures on "Moral Philosophy," which he delivered to a large and appreciative audience in Boston in the winter of 1830-'31. These lectures form the third volume of his published works and contain the subject matter which he discussed with his classes in the Divinity School. In these as in his other lectures Follen uses the historical method, beginning with fundamental principles, carefully laying his foundation and then building upon it with the utmost fidelity. After giving a short exposition of the meaning and scope of ethics he proceeds with a brief sketch of the various systems of antiquity, including the New Testament, followed by a discussion of Spinoza and Kant. These discussions along with his running commentary and criticisms show that he was very much at home in the

[1] *Works*, I, 262.

field of philosophical thought. After laying his historical background he takes up the subject of ethics itself discussing: (1) the foundation of morals and religion in human nature; (2) the development of these principles by education; (3) their establishment in society, chiefly by the institutions of church and state.

Ethics, or morality, as he conceives it, refers to human conduct as right or wrong, that is, as conforming or opposed to the dictates of conscience; it is the duties of man enjoined by reason whether prescribed or not by the laws of society, or by what is conceived as the will of God. Thus he distinguishes not only between religion and morality but employs the word morality in the scientific sense of ethics. His ethical system may be summed up in short as follows: Every individual must ascertain by the use of his reason in what his duty consists; by the exercise of his reason he can deduce the moral law. His action to be ethical must proceed from choice or free will, and from a desire for happiness. Since happiness increases as one advances toward perfection, then the ultimate object of ethical conduct is human perfection. In his pursuit of perfection man has certain duties to self, to society, and to God. His social duties consist in promoting the welfare of his fellow man, and out of these duties arises the necessity of civil government, whose only purpose is to secure equal rights and justice to all. From man's religious nature and his obligations growing out of his relations to God arises the necessity of religious institutions.

From Kant and Fichte Follen accepts the view that the moral law is the utterance of reason; with Schiller he rejects Kant's doctrine that an act loses its moral character if it is performed for the sake of happiness or pleasure; with Fries he agrees that moral action should spring from conviction through reason, but disagrees with his demand that the conviction of the individual should coincide with that of cultured men. On some points he disagrees with Kant, but characterizes his system as the product of unprecedented intellectual endeavor, as a system which must always exert a profound

influence on those who study it, causing them to stand on higher ground than before.

It is not necessary here to enter into any further discussion of Follen's ethical system. Let is suffice to say that in these lectures he gave in all probability the first public discussion in this country of German philosophical thought, especially that of Kant.[1]

President James Marsh of the University of Vermont was one of the earliest pioneers in planting the seeds of German theological learning in this country. As early as 1821 he was studying German with the aid of Professor Moses Stuart at Andover, and soon after gave some attention to German philosophy. His biographer, J. Torrey, records [2] that "with the aid of Coleridge and Mme. de Staël he began to consult Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, then a perfect terra incognita to American scholars." In 1829 Marsh republished in this country Coleridge's "Aids to Reflection" with an introduction, in which he sums up the principal points of Coleridge's system of philosophical and religious thought. In a letter to Coleridge the same year he wrote: [3] "The German philosophers, Kant and his followers, are very little known in this country; and our young men who have visited Germany have paid little attention to that department of study while there. I cannot boast of being wiser than others in this respect; for though I have read a part of the works of Kant, it was under many disadvantages, so that I am indebted to your writings for the ability to understand what I have read of his works, and am waiting with some impatience for that part of your works,

[1] Prior to this time Kant was scarcely more than a name in America. In his Century Discourse (1801) President Dwight of Yale alluded to Kant as a subverter of morals, and two years later Samuel Miller in his Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century gave a distorted account of Kant's philosophy based upon a London review of an English translation of the original. In his American Philosophy, 512, Riley states that Kant's system found its first sympathetic interpreters in the United States in certain Pennsylvania Germans such as F. A. Rauch in his Psychology of 1840 and S. S. Schmucker in his Mental Philosophy of 1842.—Follen's lectures, however, antedate these works by ten years.

[2] *Memoirs and Remains of Rev. Dr. Marsh*, 43.

[3] Ibid., 137.

which will aid more directly in the study of those subjects of which he treats. * * * "

Shortly after publishing his Inaugural Address Follen received from Marsh a letter of inquiry concerning German philosophy and books pertaining thereto. Follen replied in a long letter,[1] in which he recommended the Anthropology of Kant, the psychologies of Carus and Fries, Tennemann's History of Philosophy, Schulze's and Tasche's works on logic, the latter of which was compiled from notes taken on Kant's lectures. His letter closes thus: "If these books should be of any service to you, I should be happy to lend them to you, and will send them in any way you may point out. There are many other topics on which I wish to communicate with you, particularly the plan of our mutual friend, Mr. Henry, to publish a philosophical journal, which seems to me a very desirable object. I hope this summer will not pass away without bringing me the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with you. At any rate I earnestly hope for a frequent exchange of thought with you upon subjects of such deep interest to us both."

This letter contains the only information that the writer of this treatise has been able to find concerning the relations between Follen and Marsh; but it is sufficient to prove, at least, that Follen's influence as an authority on German philosophical thought was making itself felt in various directions.

GYMNASTICS.

The year 1825 is not only a landmark in the history of German instruction in the United States, but marks also the beginning of gymnastic training in American schools as a part of a liberal education and as a means to complete harmonious development of the whole man. The impulse which led to the espousal of physical education in the 19th century came from Germany and was distinctly humanitarian in its nature. The pioneers of this movement in America were Follen, Beck, and Lieber, disciples of that rugged old German patriot, "Turnvater" Jahn, whose ideal was to create a strong, bold race of

[1] Ibid., 153.

men, vigorous and independent in body as well as in mind. As early as 1772 this ideal had found expression by J. B. Michaelis in a poetic letter to Uz entitled "Unsere Bestimmung," in which the author asserted that in order to attain the lost "Gesundheit meines Volkes" physical culture was as necessary as the education of the mind. The movement thus started culminated in the endeavors of Jahn, the father of German gymnastics.

Brooding over the humiliation of Germany by Napoleon, Jahn conceived the idea of restoring the spirit of his countrymen by the development of their physical and moral powers through the practice of gymnastics. His object was to produce a manly character in the German youth by means of a thorough physical education and thus to prepare them for a successful struggle against the conqueror. He began by opening up a Turnplatz at Berlin in 1811, where he taught the young gymnasts to regard themselves as members of a guild for the emancipation of the fatherland. Rousseau, Basedow, Guts Muths, and Pestalozzi had done much for the education of the youth, but Jahn could be satisfied with nothing less than the education of the whole people. From this idea arose his "Teutsches Volksthum" (1810), in which he drew with a masterly hand all the features of the purest, noblest humanity as it had manifested itself in the strong and tender character of the German people at all times, and pointed out physical training as the means for the maintenance and further development of this character. His idea was to awaken the Germans from their slumber and to teach them that only through the harmonious cultivation of all their powers could they prepare themselves to rise in defense of their liberties. His ideas of national education were given to the public through the medium of his "Teutsche Turnkunst," which soon gave to gymnastics a national character. In the many gymnasiums which now sprung up all over the country the German youth acquired for the most part the strength and self-reliance upon which depended the issue of that life and death struggle for freedom and fatherland in 1813. How closely Jahn's work is connected

with the development of universal military service in Germany, the so-called Volksheer, is evident.

Such were the ideas, such the system which Follen and other promoters of German culture sought to introduce into American educational institutions.

Prior to 1825 physical training in its proper sense had no recognition or standing in the curriculum of American schools and colleges except in the West Point Military Academy, but under the direct influence of the Germans physical education became a subject of the greatest interest in New England, especially in and around Boston, and Follen was one of the main leaders of the movement. It seems quite probable that the Round Hill School was the first institution in the United States to make physical training a part of the regular instruction. A prospectus descriptive of the new school informed the public that it was designed also "to encourage activity of body as the means of promoting firmness of constitution and vigor of mind, and to appropriate regularly a portion of each day to healthful sports and gymnastic exercises." This part of the program was intrusted to the care of Follen's friend, Karl Beck, under whose supervision the Round Hill Gymnasium was established in 1825. Concerning the nature of this first American gymnasium only meagre information has come down to us.[1] A descriptive circular [2] issued in the spring of 1826 shows with what serious purpose physical training was introduced in the school. In 1828 Beck made Jahn's "Teutsche Turnkunst" accessible to the public through an English translation, in the preface of which he explains that physical training is of the greatest importance not only for the individual but also for the national safety and welfare. Several writers[3] note that Follen also was connected with Round Hill in 1825, but this is evidently an error; however he visited Beck twice

[1] Cf. Ellis, Recollections of Round Hill, *Educational Review,* I, 33ff.; also Hartwell, *Circular of Infor.,* No. 5, p. 23, U. S. Bureau of Ed., 1885.

[2] Cf. Leonard's article in *Mind and Body,* XII, 221f.

[3] Ellis, Hartwell, and Faust in his *German Element in the U. S.,* II, 214, 388.

during the summer of that year, and since he was so closely connected with him in personal friendship and educational ideals this allusion to the beginning of gymnastics in the Round Hill School is made here.

As a trained gymnast and an enthusiastic admirer of Jahn Follen was well qualified to become the father of gymnastic training in American university life. As soon as he reached Cambridge he began gymnastic exercises with the students at Harvard and soon opened up the first college gymnasium in America. About three months after his arrival he wrote [1] to Beck as follows concerning his progress: "I have commenced gymnastic exercises with the students. The College furnishes the implements and will give us a place. At present I use one of the dining halls. All show much zeal. In Boston a gymnasium is soon to be established. The matter will lead further probably than most at present anticipate." The following remark in the "American Journal of Education" for April, 1826, indicates that the gymnasium was attracting favorable attention: "We are happy to understand that a gymnasium has been instituted at Cambridge, under the superintendence of a gentleman from Germany. The result thus far is very satisfactory, both to the instructors and the students. A meeting has been held and a committee appointed to take the proper measures for establishing a gymnasium in Boston."

In the "Catalogue [2] of the Officers and Students of the University in Cambridge" for the academic year, 1826-'27, appears "Charles Follen, J. U. D., Instructor in German and Lecturer on Civil Law;" but in that for the academic year, 1827-'28, he is called "Instructor in German and Superintendent of the Gymnasium;" and in both of these catalogues the following passage occurs: "The regular Gymnastic exercises when the Superintendent of the Gymnasium is present are on Wednesday and Friday from 12 to 1 o'clock; or when the length of the day admits, after evening Commons. On Monday the Monitors and Vice-Monitors meet separately with the

[1] *Works,* I, 161.

[2] The following information concerning the Harvard Catalogues is taken from Leonard's article in *Mind and Body,* XII, 251.

Superintendent to prepare for the general exercises." The Catalogues for 1828-'29 and 1829-'30 give Follen the title, "Instructor in the German Language, in Ethics and in Civil and Ecclesiastical History," but make no mention of gymnastic exercises. Continuing from 1826 through 1829 the following paragraph is included: "Military exercises are allowed on Tuesday and Thursday from 12 to 1 o'clock or after evening Commons, with music not oftener than every other time and the liberty of a parade on the afternoon of Exhibition days."

Concerning this pioneer period of gymnastics at Harvard very little information seems to be available outside of a few reminiscences written years after that time. We know, however, that Follen's efforts were supported by an appeal from Dr. John C. Warren, who was at that time professor of anatomy and surgery in the Medical College. "In my lectures annually delivered at Cambridge," says Warren,[1] "I have explained the great importance of physical exercise in developing the organic structure of the body, as well as its necessity for maintaining it in that degree of vigor which by nature it was destined to possess. The obvious failure of health in a great number of individuals in the University gave weight to these considerations and led the Government of the University to make some arrangements for gymnastic exercises in the grounds assigned for the sports of students. The young gentlemen entered into the plan with great ardor, and the apparatus was kept in repair and activity for a number of years."

In his "Reminiscences of Harvard 1822-'26" the Rev. Cazneau Palfrey speaks of this event in the following words:[2] "The first movement in the direction of gymnastics made in college was made in my senior year. Dr. Follen, soon after his arrival in Boston, excited an interest in gymnastic exercises and opened a gymnasium in the city. The medical professors of the College published an appeal to the students, strongly recommending to them the practice of gymnastic exercises; and a meeting of all the classes was held in the College chapel

[1] *Life of Warren,* I, 232.

[2] *The Harvard Register,* II, 193.

(such a meeting as I do not remember hearing of on any other occasion), at which a response was made to this appeal, and resolutions passed expressing our readiness to follow the suggestions made in it. One of the unoccupied commons halls was fitted up with various gymnastic appliances, and other fixtures were erected on the Delta, the enclosure now occupied by Memorial Hall. But Dr. Follen did not confine his operations to these two localities. One day he was to be seen issuing from the College yard at a dog-trot, with all the College at his heels in single file, and arms akimbo, making a train a mile long bound for the top of Prospect Hill. Great was the amazement and amusement of all passers-by."

Dr. Peabody also has handed down a similar account [1] as follows: "Dr. Follen first introduced gymnastics as a system into Harvard College, certainly of his own motion, and, as I believe, gratuitously. The Delta, where Memorial Hall now stands, was furnished with masts, parallel bars, and the then usual variety of apparatus for athletic training and exercise; and one of the larger dining-rooms under the chapel in University Hall was similarly fitted up. We exercised under Dr. Follen's instruction and supervision. He taught us to run with the minimum of fatigue, and with the body thrown slightly forward, the arms akimbo, and breathing only through the nose; and he repeatedly led the entire body of students, except the few lame and the fewer lazy, on a run without pause, from the Delta to the top of a hill now crowned by the most conspicuous of the Somerville churches, and back again after a ten minutes' halt. One of my classmates, George F. Haskins (afterward Rev. Father Haskins of the Angel Guardian), so far profited by Dr. Follen's teaching that after graduating he established and conducted a gymnasium at Brown University, and in later years of well and widely known philanthropic service, made thorough gymnastic training a part of his educational system for the boys under his charge."

Another allusion [2] to the Turnplatz on the Delta is made

[1] *Harvard Reminiscences,* 120f.

[2] *The Harvard Book,* II, 186.

by T. W. Higginson, who was born in 1823: "One of my most impressive early recollections is of a certain moment when I looked out timidly from my father's gateway, on what is now Kirkland Street, in Cambridge, and saw the forms of young men climbing, swinging, and twirling aloft in the open playground opposite. It was the triangular field then called the Delta, where the great Memorial Hall now stands. The apparatus on which these youths were exercising was, to my childish eyes, as inexplicable as if it had been a pillory or a gallows, which indeed it somewhat resembled. It consisted of high uprights and cross-bars, with ladders and swinging ropes, and complications of wood and cordage, whose details are vanished from my memory. Beneath some parts of the apparatus there were pits sunk in the earth, and so well constructed that they remained long after the wood work had been removed. This early recollection must date back as far as 1830."

Having become interested in Follen's gymnasium work at Harvard Dr. Warren took active steps in founding the Tremont Gymnasium [1] in Boston, the first public gymnasium in this country. The promotion of this enterprise was begun by a private committee, who made successful application to the city council for a piece of vacant ground which might be improved for the purpose of commencing the experiment. All that remained to be done was to enclose and cover the gymnasium ground and procure a teacher with requisite apparatus. After defraying the initial expense the institution was to be self-supporting by moderate tuition fees within the reach of all classes of the community. Its primary object was to furnish opportunity and means to persons of every age for the regular practice of bodily exercise. If the experiment should be successful it was designed to make the gymnasium a department of public education under the patronage of the city. These tentative arrangements were submitted to the citizens of Boston at a meeting held in the Exchange Coffee House on

[1] The following information concerning the establishment of this gymnasium is taken from editorial notices in the *American Journal of Education*, 1826, I, 436, 443, 635, 669, 701.

the 15th of June, 1826. A deputation from Harvard was present to explain the course of exercises at the College Gymnasium and its beneficial effects. It was stated to the meeting that the health of the students had been greatly improved; that intellectual vigor was found to be the consequence of physical improvement; that the diseases and inquietudes of feeble digestion had disappeared from among the students; that the demands for sensation were now fully satisfied by the manly exercise of the gymnasium; and finally that its social effects were not the least of its consequences to be valued, inasmuch as one common interest in a commendable pursuit had brought into contact and friendly feeling those who might have passed the whole period of college life without being more to each other than mere strangers.

This deputation also read to the meeting the following letter, drafted by a committee of Harvard students, which shows, too, the salutary effects of Follen's innovation: "From the short experience we have had in gymnastic exercises we believe them highly beneficial and we feel a sincere desire that others should participate in the advantages to be derived from them. The improvement in health has been perceptible and general among all those who have engaged in them. The cheerfulness which they produce and the increased agility which results from them are remarkable. The mind sympathizes with the body, and is equally acted on. We are glad to find physical education gaining ground; and hope it may soon become a regular part of the system of education. The soldier, sailor, traveler and men of many mechanical employments find the accomplishments of the gymnasium of the first in their daily business; and in cases of emergency, they are of the highest importance in every walk of life." After all the foregoing views had been presented the meeting resolved: "That it is expedient to attempt the establishment of a Gymnastic School in Boston; and that a committee of five (headed by Dr. Warren) be selected to carry the first resolution into effect; and that it be authorized to receive voluntary contributions and apply them for the establishment of a Gymnasium at such time and in such manner as they may think expedient."

After negotiating in vain to secure Jahn himself as the director of the Boston Gymnasium, Dr. Warren prevailed upon Follen to become the principal instructor until some other qualified man could be found for the position. The gymnasium was opened in the autumn of 1826, as indicated by Follen's letter [1] to Beck under date of September 26th: "Day after tomorrow my rope-dancing begins in Boston. The gallows stand in significant majesty on the spot. There is no lack of gallows-birds, large and small, genteel and vulgar." On the 15th of October Follen wrote [2] his friend Professor Karl Jung in Basel concerning his activity in gymnastics, as follows: "I have established an excellent Turnplatz in Boston and have agreed to superintend it for a year at a salary of eight hundred dollars, which will require from four to five hours of my time three days of the week. The other three week days I spend six hours daily in the College as one of the four teachers of modern literature. On these three days the instruction in gymnastics at Boston is conducted by my assistant, a young American by the name of Turner, whom I have trained on the Turnplatz here in Cambridge, another of my creations. The whole institution in Boston has been erected at the expense of an association of the most noted men, who take part in the various exercises also, although several of them are over fifty years of age. I have reasons to believe that gymnastics will spread from here over the whole country and have an important influence upon the intellectual as well as the physical condition of the nation."

In the November number (1826) of the "Journal of Education" the editor notes that "the Gymnasium is under the superintendence of Dr. Follen, instructor in Harvard University, who is assisted by Mr. Turner, a distinguished gymnast of the establishment of Cambridge," and speaks in glowing terms of the success of the enterprise. He closes his remarks by pointing out the democratic influence of such an institution, —the very point that Beck sought to make clear in the preface

[1] *Works,* I, 163.

[2] Follen-Briefe, No. 13, *Jahrbuch, D. A. H. G.,* XIV, 31f.

to his translation of the "Teutsche Turnkunst." "Perhaps one of the most gratifying circumstances connected with the gymnasium," says the editor, "is the great diversity of situation in life to which the pupils belong. Physicians, lawyers, and clergymen are intermixed with young men from the counter and the counting-house, and with boys from the public schools. This circumstance is found not at all unfavorable to the decorum and success with which the exercises are conducted, and is, we think, a very satisfactory indication of the extensive interest which the great subject of physical education has excited." In his "retrospect" for 1826 he mentions gymnastics as one of the greatest educational innovations of this country. "Physical culture," he observes, "has been inculcated as the basis of all education; and we do not hesitate to express our impression that the more this important subject is brought within the range of observation and experience, the larger will be the proportion of time and attention devoted to it; and that the public mind will not be satisfied, till, in all the stages of education, this branch is treated as a leading object in human improvement."

Through the recommendation of Jahn a new superintendent was secured from Germany in the summer of 1827 in the person of Franz Lieber, whereupon Follen resigned his position in order to give his undivided attention to his Harvard duties. During his incumbency such enthusiasm was aroused that the attendance reached nearly 400, and when he severed his connection with the institution the gymnasium committee expressed their deepest appreciation of the great value of his services and their profound regrets at losing them. To this Follen replied on July 3, 1827, in a letter [1] which shows also what service he had rendered to the cause of physical education in the United States and what great progress it was making:

"I shall always rejoice in remembering the truly patriotic views to which the Boston Gymnasium owes its existence, and the efficient zeal with which these exercises have been carried

[1] *Works*, I, 242.

on, and which even the severest temperature of last winter could never depress to zero. That healthy atmosphere of the mind, a cheerful mood and fine feeling, which reigned in the gymnasium, adding the charm of good society to the advantages which each individual derived from the exercises. Moreover, the pleasure of seing similar and partly filial institutions spring up in other cities seemed to justify the hope that gymnastic exercises would be generally adopted as a regular branch of education, and as a source of health, strength and peacefulness, particularly to those persons whose condition of life is such as to induce them to neglect the cultivation of their physical powers. Besides these general grounds of satisfaction, I have many particular reasons for cherishing the recollections of the services I rendered to this institution. As an instructor I succeeded in obtaining, perhaps too soon, that which I consider the most desirable result of all teaching, a number of pupils far surpassing their master. I sincerely wish and hope that the gymnasium may continue a benefit to this enlightened city, and that its branches may spread over all this free and happy land, which my principles lead me to consider as my country, while the kindness of its inhabitants makes me embrace it as my home."

From the gymnasiums of Harvard, Boston, and Round Hill gymnastics spread rapidly to nearly all the principal schools and colleges in the country, and the movement was prosecuted with great ardor as long as the novelty of it lasted, but owing to an insufficient appreciation of its importance this enthusiasm gradually subsided after a few years. However, the interest which gymnastics had aroused in physical education led to a discussion of this important subject by the medical and educational journals of the country and not only served thereby to make people realize in a vague way the full import of the old Latin proverb, mens sana in corpore sano, but gave rise also to a movement for the study of physiology and hygiene. Thus the essential spirit of the gymnastic movement which Follen inaugurated was perpetuated by the physiology movement,[1] which it had inspired. This in turn prepared the

[1] Cf. *Reports of Com. of Ed.*, 1897-98, I, 555.

way for the revival of gymnastics in the 50s, culminating subsequently in that great outburst of the modern gymnastic spirit, from which has developed our modern gymnasiums and systems of athletics, which have become a permanent and characteristic feature of our national life.

PLAN OF A NEW EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION.

In a preceding chapter allusion has been made to Follen's early plan to found in this country a German state with a German educational institution, which was to serve as a nucleus from which to extend German civilization over America. After arriving here he substituted for this impracticable scheme the more feasible plan of adapting German methods to American conditions, especially in educational matters. To this end he retained the idea of founding an academy on the German plan, but not until he had resided here nearly ten years did he make any attempt to carry it out.

As noted elsewhere, the professorship of German literature at Harvard had been established for a period of five years, but without any definite promise on the part of the Corporation that it would be continued beyond that time. Before the term expired, however, Follen had reasons to suspect that his appointment would not be renewed, and feeling the necessity of making some provisions for himself elsewhere, he began toward the close of 1834 to consider his long-cherished project. Although he disagreed with the authorities in many respects concerning questions of college government, as his wife notes, he was deeply attached to Harvard and earnestly desired to devote his talent to its development and welfare, believing that he could in this position render his best service by promoting German educational ideas in this country; but when this hope was thwarted he began to draw up plans for a new literary institution, which he wished to found at Boston in imitation somewhat of the German system. With the true zeal of a reformer it was always his fixed purpose to establish the principles of freedom and justice and to overthrow whatever was arbitrary and tyrannical in political, re-

ligious, and educational institutions. He had absolute confidence in the higher qualities of human nature, and believed that the academic youth should be under less outward restraint, both in their choice of studies and in their general conduct in order to develop a feeling of self-reliance and a spirit of self-control; hence as a staunch advocate of German "akademische Freiheit" he stood for a larger freedom in educational matters than obtained in American academic life. From the very first he had advocated the reorganization of the American universities on the German plan, explaining that in the German universities each department of learning such as philosophy, law, medicine, theology, maintained professors representing the various schools of thought so that the student might have the opportunity to test the various doctrines for themselves. He believed that the preparatory schools, such as he wished to establish, should train their pupils in such a way that they would begin their professional studies in the universities, not with prejudices and fixed opinions, but with open minds and opportunity to gain truth from whatever source.

According to the prospectus [1] of the proposed Boston Seminary, as Follen's school was to be called, it was designed to give young men the advantages of a liberal training in all the important branches of a general, classical, and business education without compelling those who were preparing for the professions to study the ancient languages. The departmental and elective systems were to be introduced, the modern languages and literatures as also the natural and physical sciences were to receive a large place in the curriculum, and in addition to the regular instruction private study and research was to be encouraged. There was to be no artificial system of rank, or scale of merit, founded upon the relative attainments of the students, and all sectarian or party influence whatsoever was to be strictly excluded from the seminary. It was designed also to discard the artificial system of discipline which obtained in most American schools. Follen had little sympathy with the prevalent notion of the times that colleges

[1] Given in *Works*, I, 623.

should be isolated in small towns in order to guard the morals of the students. According to his view college life should differ in no respect from the ordinary world of men and affairs; hence he proposed to locate his school in Boston not only to give the students the many literary and social advantages of a large city, but also to accustom them to the kind of surroundings in which they would in all probability spend their future years.

But this is a sketch only of what might have been, for on account of insufficient encouragement and support Follen's Boston Seminary came to naught but a plan on paper. However, it serves to show how he desired to contribute to the improvement of American scholarship through the educational ideals of his native land. Had he been able to put his seminary into operation his talent would have continued in the service of American education, and the great good he would thus have continued to do as an interpreter of German philosophy and literature is beyond all estimation.

HIS INFLUENCE IN HARVARD.

According to the statement of his wife Follen's sympathy for the antislavery cause had materially injured his prospects for advancement in Harvard.[1] At any rate he was definitely informed in 1834 that the Corporation did not deem it expedient to renew his appointment as professor, but that it would retain him as instructor in the German language if he desired to remain at a salary of five hundred dollars. After nearly ten years of unswerving devotion to the institution he saw himself reduced to a position yielding scarcely enough for even a hand-to-mouth living, or compelled to seek employment elsewhere. After careful deliberation he chose the latter alternative and in January, 1835, resigned his instructorship to take effect at the close of the academic year. In March the Corporation "voted that his resignation be accepted and that a suitable person be employed as Instructor in the German language until next Commencement, in the place of Dr. Follen, re-

[1] Cf. *Works,* I, 343ff.

signed."[1] This meant of course that his resignation was accepted to go into effect at once. But no blame attached to him for the loss of his position.

As a teacher and lecturer his success was unquestioned. He was loved by the students, and his classroom was always crowded. Josiah Quincy records[2] that he performed the duties of his office in an acceptable manner and that his services were characterized by learning, labor, and fidelity. Miss Peabody[3] also characterizes him as a man endowed both by nature and culture with the highest qualifications for a teacher and leader of youth. In a letter congratulating him on his Inaugural Address Edward Livingston spoke of the relative value of German and French for American education, concluding thus:[4] "The introduction of the German literature and language cannot but have a powerful effect on our own. It is fortunate for the country that the task of separating the valuable material from the dross has fallen into such able hands, and honorable to the university to have discovered and availed itself of the advantage such talents afford." An extract[5] from the peroration of the Class Oration delivered by Mr. Osgood in 1832 gives evidence also of the esteem in which he was held by the students. The orator was of the opinion that the value and pleasure derived from the study of German literature with Professor Follen was the most important advantage that Harvard had to offer. "For the able and kind manner in which this has come to us," he concluded, "we should express our gratitude to one, who has labored assiduously for our improvement; and who must richly attain the wish, expressed in his Inaugural Address, to do justice to his feelings of grateful attachment to his adopted country and to his native land."

[1] Cf. documents quoted in *Works,* I, 358ff.

[2] *History of Harvard University,* II, 385.

[3] Cf. Sprague's *Annals of the American Pulpit,* VIII, 547.

[4] *Works,* I, 308.

[5] Ibid., I, 312.

It may not be out of place to add the following eulogy[1] on Follen, written by James Freeman Clarke soon after the former had severed his connection with Harvard College: "We are glad to see in the July number of the London and Westminster Review a high tribute to that distinguished scholar, philosopher, philanthropist and Divine, Dr. Charles Follen. Our regard for that gentleman is so great that we rejoice in every tribute paid to his worth. His life has been one of continuous sacrifice to principle. We know him chiefly as an instructor in the course of his professional duties. Our whole class loved him,—a feeling towards an instructor very unusual among captious and restless collegians. We all love him and revere him now. We never hear his name pronounced without giving him a blessing. We say this passing word because we cannot help doing justice to our feelings. We sincerely hope that he may find some sphere of action in which his large talents and his great learning in law, philosophy, belles-letters and theology may be more widely felt in our country. He has indeed already done much for German literature among us and has acquired a high reputation as a lecturer on civil law."

Although it is rather difficult to ascertain definitely whether Follen had any direct influence on such students of German thought as Emerson, Ripley, Alcott, Parker, Clarke, and Margaret Fuller, we know of a certainty that he stood in personal relation with most of them; and this in itself is sufficient to warrant the conclusion that they received from him, either directly or indirectly, at least some of their inspiration for German studies.

Emerson lived in Divinity Hall at that time, and although he took no part in the regular exercises of the Divinity students, there can be no doubt that he became well acquainted with Follen and his religious views. To Carlyle he wrote in 1835:[2] "We know enough about Goethe and Schiller here to

[1] From an editorial in the *Western Messenger*, Louisville, October, 1836.

[2] Emerson-Carlyle *Correspondence*, 55.

have some interest in German literature. A respectable German here, Dr. Follen, has given lectures to a good class upon Schiller. I am quite sure that Goethe's name would now stimulate the curiosity of scores of people." But as early as 1827 Follen was already discussing Goethe in the Ladies' reading circle, as his diary shows, and probably continued to do so in his lectures on German literature in the College from 1830 to 1835.

George Ripley was another of Channing's circle and he met Follen in all probability as early as 1827. Frothingham remarks [1] that Hedge's article on Coleridge in the *Christian Examiner* for March, 1833, in which he commended Kant, Fichte, and Schelling, was praised by Ripley and was doubtless of potent influence in determining the latter's bent of mind. It seems more likely, however, that Ripley's impulse to the study of German literature and philosophy came from Follen, for the latter was lecturing on German philosophy in the Divinity School in 1828-'30, and his Inaugural Address on German literature called forth in the *Christian Examiner* a complimentary review by Ripley in 1832. It is not within the scope of this investigation to give an account of Ripley's great enthusiasm for German theology and literature;[2] let it suffice to say that from this time on he contributed to the *Examiner* many articles on these subjects and became an ardent defender of Spinoza, Schleiermacher, and De Wette in that famous controversy with Professor Andrews Norton, who had accused these philosophers of atheism and irreligion.

Theodore Parker began his education in Harvard in 1830, just at the time when Follen was made professor of German literature, and it was probably from this source that he rereceived his first inspiration for German thought. "The study of German was added to French and Spanish, and he learned

[1] *Life of Ripley*, 96f.

[2] Dr. Jaeck's work on *Madame de Staël and the Spread of German Literature* gives an excellent account of the Transcendentalists' interest for German learning. It seems probable, however, that their inspiration was due far more directly to Follen than to de Staël's de L'Allemagne.

to write as well as read these languages."[1] A few years later there was organized in Boston a "Society of Friends of Progress" under the leadership of Dr. Channing. Its meetings were for a free and bold discussion of all current subjects of theology and social life. Here Parker found the charm of good companionship in the persons of such men as Hedge, Ripley, Alcott and Follen.[2] It was the study of German that exercised the dominant influence upon his life. Through its medium he was brought into contact with German theology and philosophy; and Kant, Goethe, Schleiermacher, and De Wette opened his eyes to the new possibilities of Biblical interpretation. In consequence of this assimilation of German thought he gave to Unitarianism a still greater breadth and freedom of thought, and to American letters a richer and more unrestrained literary self-expression.

When Bronson Alcott went to Boston to establish his infant school Follen was one of the first men he consulted concerning his project.[3] From this time on, November, 1828, he was on intimate terms with Follen and associated with him not only in the meetings of the Channing circle, but also in those of the famous Transcendental Club, which Follen attended occasionally.[4]

Margaret Fuller was one of the most remarkable leaders and expounders of German thought in this country. She was born in Cambridge in 1810 and lived there until 1833. Prior to Follen's arrival she had read Mme. de Staël's book, and through her friend F. H. Hedge she had become interested in Germany. According to J. F. Clarke, who was her constant companion during his college life, she began the study of German early in 1832. He states[5] that both were attracted toward German literature at the same time by the writings of Carlyle, and that in about three months from the time that Margaret

[1] Weiss, *Life and Correspondence of Theodore Parker,* I, 49.

[2] Ibid., 105.

[3] *Memoirs of Bronson Alcott,* I, 118.

[4] Ibid., 289.

[5] *Memoirs of Margaret Fuller,* I, 114.

began to study the German language she was reading with ease its literary masterpieces. She began without a teacher, but was aided and encouraged by Clarke, who was at that time studying under Follen. Her family moved in the social and intellectual circles of Cambridge, and it is very probable that she often met Follen on social occasions and heard accounts of his discussions of Goethe in the ladies' reading circle. Follen's Inaugural Address, published in the autumn of 1831, was the best general account of German literature that had appeared up to that time and it attracted universal attention and comment. Immediately after this Margaret Fuller began to study German. In the winter of 1832-'33 Follen delivered his first course of public lectures on Schiller; and these, too, attracted the attention of Boston and Cambridge intellectual circles. Immediately after this Margaret Fuller wrote in her diary in January, 1833:[1] "I have now a pursuit of immediate importance: to the German language and literature will I give my undivided attention. I have made rapid progress for one quite unassisted;" and in June she made the following entry:[2] I don't like Goethe as well as Schiller now. I mean, I am not so happy in reading him. That perfect wisdom and merciless nature seems cold after these seducing pictures of forms more beautiful than truth." Carlyle's articles on German literature began to appear at least five years prior to this, yet we find in the diary no such entries concerning her enthusiasm for German, as the above, until after Follen's lectures on Schiller. Concerning the major influences that turned Margaret Fuller toward the field of German thought it would probably not be far out of the way to sum up the matter thus: Mme. de Staël prepared the soil, Follen sowed the seed, and Carlyle supplied the sunshine and showers for the future harvest.

Although the Göttingen men paved the way for the introduction of German learning there is no doubt that Follen's influence at Harvard was one of the greatest forces then at work in the promotion of it in this country. The introduction

[1] Higginson, *Margaret Fuller Ossoli,* 41.

[2] *Memoirs of Margaret Fuller,* I. 117.

of the German language and literature was valuable not only per se, but contributed largely to a broader and deeper study of all the other great departments of knowledge; history, biology, theology, archæology, economics, and especially philosophy,—subjects in which the German scholars were unrivaled. At the beginning of the 19th century the German university more than any other gave careful and systematic training in the use of libraries and laboratories, inculcated the habit of independent thought and research, quickened the creative instinct, and engendered a spirit of freedom both in teaching and in learning. Its highest ideal was the pursuit of truth, its highest aim the emancipation of the human spirit. *Wissenschaft, Lernfreiheit, Lehrfreiheit* was the motto of the German universities, and this was the ideal which Follen and the Göttingen men brought from Germany for the enrichment and enlargement of higher education in America. Some of the young men who became later the writers and critics of the day came under the direct influence of Follen at that time and were probably directly or indirectly inspired by him to the study of German intellectual life.

The collective influence of these earliest pioneers of German learning both on Harvard College and on American thought was very great. It helped to break up that intellectual sterility which had resulted from the isolation of a merely colonial life and prepared the way for the vast modern growth of colleges, schools, and libraries in this country. In the opinion of Thomas Wentworth Higginson [1] "it culminated later in the brilliant Boston circle of authors, most of whom were Harvard men and all of whom had felt the Harvard influence."

[1] *Harvard Graduate Magazine,* VI, 17f.

CHAPTER II.

HIS RELATION TO UNITARIANISM.

According to his Inaugural Address Follen's conception of literature was so comprehensive that he included in it not only the products of poetry and philosophy, but of theology as well. A discussion of his activity as a promoter of German studies in America must therefore of necessity proceed to the consideration of his endeavors in the field of religion, and of its historical relation to contemporary movements in the same field.

By the middle of the 18th century the sensualistic philosophy of Hobbes and Locke had come to dominate the life and thought of French and English civilization, while similarly in Germany the predominant feature of the intellectual life was the abstract rationalism which Wolff had deduced from the philosophy of Leibniz. The general rationalistic attitude of mind during the period of enlightenment was based essentially upon sense perception; human knowledge was limited partly by the bounds of so-called experience and partly by abstract logical reasoning. In religion the dogmatic assumptions of the church were rejected and all belief was made dependent upon the dictates of reason. This rationalistic method of thought extended also to the field of general literature, which now became didactic, formal, unimaginative,—a product merely of the understanding. Artificiality, materialism and skepticism finally came to reign supreme. The age of reason was at its height.[1]

Gradually, however, in the second half of the century a reaction set in; a movement for spiritual emancipation, for freedom from the intellectualistic bondage in which the human mind was held by laws and traditions. This movement reverted to man's instincts and feelings; to his original human rights. It was therefore an effort to revolutionize life by emancipating the individual from the fetters of dry reason, from conventional ethics, orthodox intolerance, and time-worn literary traditions; an attempt to enlarge man's spiritual life

[1] W. Windelband, *Geschichte der Philosophie,* 366ff.

by directing him back to the simplicity of nature; a reassertion of the rights of the heart along with those of the head. Artificiality began now to yield to nature, cosmopolitanism to patriotism, skepticism to optimism, and materialism to idealism. Rousseau admonished his contemporaries to listen only to the voice of the heart, to obey only the primitive instincts, to pay homage only to the universal laws of life. Hamann maintained that the visible and tangible, whatever can be demonstrated and taught, cannot be final; that the universe is permeated by forces which lie beyond mortal vision. Herder applied Rousseau's doctrine of return to nature to the field of literature, and in accordance with Hamann's oracular saying that poetry is the mother-tongue of the race laid down the new doctrine that the best poetry is popular, naive, spontaneous, and not a product of conscious art.

In the domain of philosophy the old struggle between the realists and idealists was apparently still being waged. The great question was: Is all knowledge derived from without through the senses or does at least a part of it originate within the mind itself? By combining the theories of the idealists and realists Kant laid the foundation for modern intellectual life. By his searching analysis of the mind he demonstrated that from its very nature the intellect can deal only with the phenomenal world, and that the infinite is accordingly unknowable; but he pointed out further that while such ideas as God, immortality, and moral freedom cannot be demonstrated, they are nevertheless matters of intuitive knowledge. The distinction between Kant's Pure Reason and Locke's Human Understanding was the philosophic basis of the new idealism. Kant distinguished between the phenomenal world and its transcendental background, the thing-in-itself; Fichte maintained on the other hand that the thing-in-itself like its phenomena is only a product of the mind; while Schelling and the Romanticists held that both mind and matter, the inner and the outer world, are the product, in different stages of evolution, of a mysterious, all-pervading creative power whose existence they knew intuitively and whose nature they sought to understand and to reveal. By distinguishing between ra-

tional and empirical knowledge Kant established in his categorical imperative a new and exalted system of ethics; and upon the freedom of the will, which he postulated as the basis of all moral action, Fichte, Schiller and Fries reared their systems of ethical idealism.

The close of the century marked the beginning of a new epoch in the evolution of religious thought also. With Herder a reaction set in against both rationalism and dogmatism; an attempt to establish a union between religion and culture, and to reconstruct theology on new lines; but it was Schleiermacher who gave a definite and classical expression to the movement. This he did in his famous "Reden über die Religion" which appeared in 1799. In these addresses he disclaims all pretension to an exposition of theological doctrine, but seeks simply to convince his skeptical contemporaries that religion is an essential element of human nature and therefore indispensable to the complete development of the inner life of man. In his attempt to present religion in its most sublime aspects he shows that its truth rests neither on tradition nor on miracles, neither on the church nor on the Bible, but on the soul's sense of the Infinite. In his "Glaubenslehre," which is a further development of the principles laid down in the "Reden," he seeks to show the relation of religious feeling to its different expressions in dogma, history, and creeds. The central thought of his system is that religion neither seeks like metaphysics to explain the universe, nor like morals to advance and perfect the world by the free will of man; it is not a set of dogmas, but an inner experience; it is neither thinking nor acting, but feeling. From a pious contemplation of the majesty and external order of the universe arises in the finite individual a consciousness of oneness with the infinite All and a feeling of dependence upon the Author of life. This feeling of identity with God and dependence upon Him is religion; it is a living reality and when it manifests itself in social fellowship it becomes a vital factor in the development of the human race.

Imbued with the scientific spirit Schleiermacher's writings freed protestant religion from the fetters of ecclesiasti-

cism, thus laying the foundation for modern theology. For its philosophical basis this new movement rests upon the well-known distinction made by Kant between theoretical and practical reason. Through the influence of the Kantian philosophy Schleiermacher threw aside the possibility of knowing God by means of cognition and expounded the doctrine that religion is primarily an act of faith instead of a judgment of reason.

The rationalistic tendency which characterized the intellectual life of Europe in the 18th century found its counterpart in America in Boston Unitarianism. This was in its origin and narrower sense a reaction against Calvinistic theology, which prevailed in New England. In its broader aspect it was a part of the general liberal movement for freedom of thought, and release from traditional authority; an attempt to bring religion into harmony with science and phisolosphy. As early as the beginning of the century the rationalistic tendencies of English philosophy began to creep into the religious life of Boston through the works of such men as Chillingsworth, Tillotson, Milton, Locke, Jeremy Taylor, and Samuel Clarke, whose tolerant liberal writings were read in New England throughout the century;[1] and the introduction through this source of the Arian and Arminian doctrines began gradually to exert a reactionary influence upon dogmatic theology. Between 1730 and 1750 many of the most eminent clergymen in Massachusetts, according to Josiah Quincy,[2] openly avowed doctrines which were denounced as Arian, Arminian, and Deistic; while books and pamphlets breathing a spirit of religious democracy quite at variance with the Calvinistic doctrine began to appear. This liberal trend of theology gradually developed along two lines: that of a demand for free enquiry, as represented by Jonathan Mayhew and his followers, and that of a protest against the harsher features of Calvinism, as represented by Charles Chauncy and the Universalists. When Mayhew was made pastor of the West Church in Bos-

[1] Cooke, *Unitarianism in America,* 10f., 56.

[2] *History of Harvard University,* II, 23, 52.

ton in 1747 he was already familiar with nearly all the liberal writers of England and soon became the first outspoken Unitarian in New England.[1] Along with the silent advance of liberalism went hand in hand a gradual divergence of those who believed in the deity of Christ and those who believed in his subordinate nature. Through the adoption of a revised liturgy in 1785, in which their pastor, Rev. James Freeman, omitted all reference to the Trinity, the congregation of King's Chapel in Boston was the first to become avowedly Unitarian. From this time on the liberal movement grew rapidly. It was greatly promoted by the monthly Anthology, the official organ of a scholarly group of men known as the Anthology Club; and through the appointment of Henry Ware, an avowed Unitarian, to the Hollis professorship of Divinity at Harvard that stronghold of orthodoxy passed into the control of the liberals. Soon half of the old historic churches of Massachusetts went over to the liberal party, and by 1820 arose a definite division of the Congregational churches of New England into Trinitarian and Unitarian.[2]

The Unitarians formulated no creed, but left each clergyman free to preach whatever seemed to harmonize with reason and conscience; hence their main tendency was to emphasize the authority of conscience and the freedom of enquiry, while their chief aim was to harmonize revelation and reason, and to interpret the meaning of human life in a way compatible with nature and history. This common-sense method shows that the early Unitarians were as a rule under the influence of the sensuous philosophy of Locke;[3] hence it was easy enough for them to shatter the foundations of orthodoxy by means of common intelligence and rational understanding. Their leaders, says Frothingham,[4] were attracted to Tillotson and Paley more than to Cudworth and Butler, and were disquieted by mysticism, enthusiasm, and rapture;

[1] Cooke, 35.

[2] Cf. such authorities as Walker, Ellis, Cooke, and Allen.

[3] Frothingham, *Transcendentalism in New England,* 109.

[4] Ibid., 110.

they were good scholars and accomplished men of letters, distinguished by practical wisdom, sober judgment, and balanced thoughtfulness that weighed opinions in the scale of evidence and argument. This sums up the strength and the weakness of the early Unitarian movement: it was strong in reason, but deficient in feeling.

In his remarks [1] on college life at the time he entered Harvard in 1794 Dr. Channing observes that society was passing through a most critical stage due to the rationalistic tendency of the times, that reverence for the authority of the past was gone, and that the tendency of all classes was to skepticism. James Freeman Clark,[2] however, has given us the best characterization of the mental and spiritual condition of New England in the early decades of the 19th century: "Locke was still the master of the realm of thought; Addison and Blair in literary expression. In poetry, the school of Pope was engaged in conflict with that of Byron and his contemporaries. Wordsworth had led the way to a deeper view of nature, but he could scarcely be called a popular writer. In theology a certain liberalism prevailed, and the doctrines of Christianity were inferred from counting and weighing texts on either side. Not the higher reason, with its intuition of eternal ideas, but the analytic understanding, with its logical methods, was considered to be the ruler in the world of thought. There was more of culture than of intellectual life, more of good habits than of moral enthusiasm. Religion had become very much of an external institution. Christianity consisted of holding orthodox opinions, going regularly to church, and listening every Sunday to a certain number of prayers, hymns, and sermons. Channing, it is true, had looked with a new spiritual insight into the truths of religion and morality. But still the mechanical treatment prevailed in a majority of the churches, and was considered to be the wisest and safest method. There was an unwritten creed of morals, literature, and social thought to which all were expected to conform. There was little originality and much repetition.* * *

[1] *Life of Channing,* (Memorial Ed.), 30.

[2] *Nineteenth Century Questions,* 273f.

It was regarded as a kind of duty to think as everyone else thought; a sort of delinquency, or weakness, to differ from the majority."

The decade beginning with 1820, however, marks a new epoch in the spiritual history of New England. Unitarianism now entered upon a new stage of development, the so-called Transcendental movement, which was, like German Idealism, a reaction against the rationalistic spirit of the times. While the New England movement was essentially religious it possessed also the philosophical and literary phases of its German prototype. Philosophically it was a substitution of intuition for understanding; of the idealism of Kant and Fichte for English empiricism. In literature it drew its inspiration from Wordsworth, Coleridge, and the Germans. In religion it was spiritual rather than theological, supplanting dogmas and creeds by a search into nature and into the depths of the human heart for the divine element of all life. The unfettered mind began now to revel in beauty, poetry, and philosophy; and men were brought into closer touch with nature, literature, and life. The conservative Unitarians remained under the influence of English philosophy and classic literature; the radicals turned to the enthusiastic study of the romantic literature and idealistic philosophy of Germany.

Those who have written on later Unitarianism, the so-called Transcendental Movement, hold various views concerning the sources of it. Some regard it as an indigenous product, while others contend that it was largely imitative of foreign thought. According to Riley[1] those who grew up with the movement have held to the former view, maintaining that Emerson's system was formulated before he became acquainted with German thought, while later critics, more skilled in tracing historical sources, have inclined to the latter view, asserting that Emerson would have been ineffective had he not made use of foreign phraseology, such as was furnished by Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection*. Frothingham, who grew up with the movement and became its historian, speaks thus:[2]

[1] *American Philosophy*, 12.

[2] *Trancendentalism in New England*, 115.

"By sheer force of genius Emerson anticipated the results of the transcendental philosophy, defined its axioms, and ran out their inferences to the end. Without help from abroad, or with such help only as none but he could use, he might have domesticated in Massachusetts an idealism as heroic as Fichte's, as beautiful as Schelling's; but it would have lacked the dialectical basis of the great German system."

Since idealism is the product of no special age or clime it had its devotees in New England, as might be expected, prior to the 19th century, the best type of whom was Samuel Johnson and Jonathan Edwards,[1] but with the advent of German thought it took on a new character. In regard to the origin of this new phase of idealism Frothingham may be quoted further as follows:[2] "To make intelligible the Transcendental philosophy of the last generation in New England it is not necessary to go far back into the history of thought. Ancient idealism, whether Eastern or Western, may be left undisturbed. Platonism and neo-Platonism may be excused from further torture on the witness-stand. The speculations of the mystics, Romanist or Protestant, need not be re-examined. The idealism of Gale, More, Pordage, of Cudworth and the later Berkeley, in England, do not immediately concern us. We need not even submit John Locke to fresh cross-examination, or describe the effect of his writings on the thinkers who came after him. The Transcendental philosophy, so-called, had a distinct origin in Immanuel Kant."

W. H. Channing has perhaps stated[3] better than anybody else the nature of this new movement: "Transcendentalism was an assertion of the inalienable integrity of man, of the immanence of Divinity in instinct. In part it was a reaction against Puritan Othodoxy; in part, an effect of renewed study of the ancients, of Plato and the Alexandrians, of Plutarch's Morals, Seneca, and Epictetus; in part the natural product of the culture of the place and time. On the somewhat

[1] Riley, 63ff.

[2] *Transcendentalism in New England,* 1.

[3] *Memoirs of Margaret Fuller,* II, 12f.

stunted stock of Unitarianism—whose characteristic dogma was trust in individual reason as correlative to Supreme Wisdom—had been grafted German Idealism, as taught by masters of most various schools—by Kant and Jacobi, Fichte and Novalis, Schelling and Hegel, Schleiermacher and De Wette, by Mme. de Staël, Cousin, Coleridge, and Carlyle, and the result was a vague yet exalting conception of the godlike nature of the human spirit. Transcendentalism, as viewed by its disciples, was a pilgrimage from the idolatrous world of creeds and rituals to the temple of the Living God in the Soul."

After discussing the various causes that contributed to the rise of the movement Goddard concludes thus:[1] "But now from this insistence on the complexity of the sources of transcendentalism and on the impossibility of assigning absolutely their respective importance, it is nevertheless proper to recur to an acknowledgment of the large element of truth in the widely accepted theory that New England transcendentalism was a German importation. The extent of the admissible generalization seems to be this. The original stimulus to the strictly metaphysical part of transcendental thought came fairly largely, but by no means exclusively, from Germany."

Through the medium of Mme. de Staël's celebrated work on Germany, an English translation of which appeared in 1813, the first meager account of German literature and philosophy reached America. The return of the Göttingen men a few years later awakened still more interest in this direction. A few New England scholars came in contact with German thought in so far as this was expounded in Coleridge's "Biographia Literaria," which appeared in 1817. A still greater impulse to the study of German, however, was given by Follen, who began at once to awaken a keen interest in German cultural ideals when he reached Cambridge in 1825, and from this time on translations and reviews of German works increased rapidly. Through the influence of the Göttingen men German literature and philosophy were just beginning to ruffle the surface of the intellectual life of Boston,

[1] Studies in New England Transcendentalism, 110 (Dissertation in the Faculty of Philosophy, Columbia University).

but it is safe to say that Follen was the only man in New England who had a comprehensive knowledge of these subjects. Both by education and nature Follen was well qualified to enter as an influential factor into the later Unitarian movement.

FOLLEN'S RELIGIOUS CHARACTER.

In addition to the foregoing historical background a short account of the development of Follen's religious nature will serve as the starting point from which to discuss his religious activity in this country.

The predominant characteristic of Follen's nature was an intense love of freedom combined with a deep mystic piety, which manifested itself in moral action through the force of will-power—a trait of character which from his earliest youth remained the guiding principle of his whole life. When he was a mere child he displayed thus early an intuitive knowledge of ethical values as indicated by his expression, "Father I forgive you," after receiving a severe punishment from his high-tempered parent.[1]

His early training, however, was in accordance with the skeptical spirit of the age. Although he was baptized in the Lutheran church and learned his catechism he was not at all receptive to the dogmatic theology of the times. In speaking of his early religious character his step-mother said[2] that the principles of the Unitarians had even then begun to engage his attention; that he occasionally spoke with much depth and feeling about them to his father, who agreed with him on this subject. Although he had the greatest admiration for the life and character of Christ, as pointed out at the beginning of this treatise, he did not accept the orthodox view concerning Christ's nature. This is probably what his step-mother meant by the above observations, for in after years he stated[3] explicitly that Christianity was according to his early views a

[1] *Works,* I, 6.

[2] Ibid., 1, 10.

[3] Cf. Sprague's *Annals of the American Pulpit,* VIII, 545.

superstition of the ignorant classes, only less tasteful in its imaginary objects than those presented by the symbolic mythology of Greece and Rome. Not until after he had entered the university did he read the Bible; concerning his first impulse thereto he gave some years later an account[1] something as follows:

As an examination for entrance to the university he was required to write upon the theme: "How can a man die for a cause?" Since he had never reflected upon the subject he could consequently think of nothing to write. Under the stress of necessity he asked himself how he was to derive power to start a strain of thought on the theme. In this quandary it occurred to him that since effort produces thoughts more or less true, finite mind must have a certain relation to a Fountain of mind, to which it can aspire and thereby realize an inspiration of truth. This attainment of truth through an effort of mind proved to him the existence of an infinite Spirit in living relation with him. Thus he seemed to discover a Living God, who was his father. This was a primal act of faith and the beginning of a new era in his life. The idea of a living communion with his Creator gave him a flood of light, and with faith that power would be given him to accomplish his task he concentrated his mind upon his subject and easily wrote his examination. This successful effort he considered as prayer and the answer thereto. He began by pondering on those objects which had induced various historical characters to give up their lives, finding that all such acts of self-sacrifice were acts of men at the summit of their energies, and implied a duality of nature, which is the distinctive human characteristic. No animal voluntarily gives up life. What then, he asked himself, is this that stands above the animal life and in sovereign power gives away life itself? The fact that there is something mortal which man can give away proved to him that there must be something immortal in the consciousness of the giver. The truth of this idea in Follen's mind was the turning point of his life; it was the consciousness of a spiritual birth.

[1] Cf. Miss Peabody's *Reminiscences of Channing*, 213ff.

Follen was now desirous of investigating and comparing the various religions of the world. The nucleus of the popular religion was the death of Christ, and he now looked into the New Testament for the first time, investigating the circumstances and seeking the motives of this death. With a decided inclination toward religious speculation his theological studies at the university tended to increase his critical attitude toward Christianity, making him unwilling to be guided by sentiment alone or to accept religious doctrine unless it coincided with his highest reason. As soon as he became conscious of his skepticism he applied himself to the study of the English Deists, the French Encyclopædists, the German Idealists, and the Pantheistic writers, in order to investigate all the arguments for and against the Christian religion, emerging with a firm and joyous faith. "For myself," he said,[1] "I can certainly say that next to the Gospel itself the books written against it have been the most efficient promoters of my belief in its divine truth."

Follen's enlarged faith, however, was something more perfect, more spiritual, than what he found in the general religious life of the times. That it was out of harmony with the established doctrine of the orthodox church is evident from his conflict with the Calvinistic clergy in Switzerland where in his lectures on the history of Christianity he gave expression to his radical views concerning God, Christ, and salvation. His new faith was born of the new philosophy, the ethical idealism, that had caused the great religious awakening of the wars of liberation. His desire to renovate both Church and State was due not only to his mystic piety and moral bent of mind, but also to the influence of Kant, Fichte, Schiller, Fries and Schleiermacher, whose doctrines he had thoroughly assimilated. Concerning the religious views of this period of his life and the influence which the failure of his political hopes had upon him, he speaks thus in the preface to his tract on Religion and the Church:[2] "When I was pursuing my studies in a German university I felt strongly impressed with the in-

[1] *Works,* I, 56.

[2] *Works,* V, 254ff.

efficacy of the established forms of faith and worship. Their unfitness to satisfy the spiritual wants of my own nature, and to quicken the religious affections and energies of the people, called up to mind the image of a Universal Church, a church of mankind, having no other foundation and support than the natural interests of men in religion. The true interests of the church, that is, the religious interests of man, seemed to me most effectually secured by relying wholly and solely on the principles of individual freedom, and intimate spiritual intercourse among men, and the tendency to infinite progress in human nature."

PLAN OF A RELIGIOUS REFORM.

This early philosophic vision never faded from Follen's mind, but continued to grow clearer and more inspiring to action. When crossing the Atlantic to commence life anew in this country he was already forming plans to carry out his long-cherished scheme of religious philanthropy "as the only star of promise amidst the gloom of disappointed hopes," as he expressed it.[1] From several of his letters and portions of his diary published in his Works it is evident that he began a keen observation of the religious life and institutions around him as soon as he landed in this country. In one of these letters [2] descriptive of American life, written to his parents less than a month after his arrival, he observes "that much depends here on religious sentiment, but nothing on religious opinion; one may declare himself an atheist, a heathen, or a Christian." He was glad to note a general interest in religion and also complete freedom in matters of religious belief; but on the other hand the fact that the religious sentiment displayed seemed to him to be rather a matter of dogma and sectarian belief than the expression of pure religious feeling convinced him at once that the religious life of America was as much in need of a thorough renovation as that of Europe. That this conviction not only strengthened his long-cherished

[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., I, 148.

scheme of religious philanthropy, but also led him from the very outset to decide definitely upon a movement for a radical reform of ecclesiastical and religious life in this country is shown conclusively by a letter [1] written from Philadelphia on the 31st of August, 1825, to his old Giessen friend, Christian Sartorius, in Mexico. After making some general observations on American life, he discusses a scheme for constitutional reform in the United States and then proceeds as follows to outline the plan of his proposed religious reform:

"I have still another plan, on which I desire to have your opinion in your next letter. Here, where complete freedom of conscience prevails, new sects are springing up daily, which indicates a vague religious aspiration. The chief defect, however, which all churches and sects have had since the earliest times is this: that they are founded upon dogmas, upon a definite confession of faith. Everyone is reared in some creed, and so complies as a rule with that which his sponsors promised in his stead at his christening. This rests upon a complete misunderstanding of rational human nature, which impels man to a continuous perfecting of his character as also of his religious conviction. On the other hand all churches have hitherto presupposed that religion consists in the acceptance and adherence to a definite confession of faith. I say: Religion is piety. This consists in letting one's self be guided by God in all his actions, that is, in striving 'to be perfect as his Father in Heaven is perfect', as Christ says. The Church is the covenant of piety, through which men mutually join to exalt themselves in feeling (in devotion) to God, to gain as adequate a conception of God as possible, and to make pious resolutions. As to the conception of God, through which the feeling and will are guided, it is two-fold: imagination and knowledge. It is art which directs the imagination toward God: Architecture, painting, music, and poetry must create for a deep veneration of God, for that most sublime inner feeling, a corresponding outward expression. Intellectual power, by virtue of which we are convinced of God's existence, is thereby promoted, so that every one in the religious assembly can fully

[1] Follen-Briefe, No. 12, *Jahrbuch D. A. H. G.*, XIV, 26ff.

express his doubts as well as his faith, rendering it necessary on the part of the speaker to be cautious only in the order and dignity of his utterances, just as in a law-making body. In addition to this the appointment of clergymen is highly advantageous: namely of men who are able, by being relieved from the necessity of working for a living, to devote their whole talent to the study of all the different religious systems. Thereby scientific knowledge and the independent thought of each individual will be combined. It should be the duty of the clergyman to address the congregation if nobody else wishes to. Of course there must be executive officials also.

"In this way I believe the church should be founded, not on a dead confession of faith, but upon a living, ever-growing conviction. Unfortunately my study of English law leaves me very little time for making a written statement of my ideas and for spreading them abroad, concerning which nobody in America has thus far any knowledge except Beck and Kahl. I have reasons for keeping silent about it until the whole plan is matured. In this manner it is possible to put an end forever to all schisms, while in the one general church each sect shall appear merely as the representative of one of a number of confessions, all of which are important for the information of the whole church."

The views which Follen expresses in this letter agree in the main with the principles laid down in Schleiermacher's religious writings, viz., the repudiation of unreasoning devotion to creeds; the differentiation of dogma and religion; the union of all sects into one church; the conception of religion as feeling, piety, and reverent contemplation of God; the sublime work of nature and art as the expression of an immanent Deity, as a symbol through which the mind and heart are directed toward the one eternal God; and the Christian Church as an association of pious men for mutual aid and cultivation of a closer relation to God. These ideas of religious reform were brought by Follen from Germany and were wholly independent of any American influence. In all probability he knew little or nothing of the New England movement when this letter was written.

INTERCOURSE WITH CHANNING.

W. E. Channing is usually called the forerunner of the new movement. At any rate his famous Baltimore sermon [1] in 1819, not only marked the climax of rational Unitarianism, but in its allusion to the dignity of human nature, the power of moral intuition, and similar ideas, struck a new chord. That he felt the need of the times is evident from the following excerpt from a letter written in praise of Wordsworth in 1820: [2] "I wish to see among Unitarians," he says, "a development of imagination and poetical enthusiasm, as well as of the rational and critical powers * * * I have before told you how much I think Unitarians have suffered from union with a heart-withering philosophy. I will now add that it has suffered also from a too exclusive application of its advocates to biblical criticism and theological controversy, in other words, from a too partial culture of mind. I fear that we must look to other schools for the thoughts which thrill us, which touch the most inward springs, and disclose to us the depths of our souls." By birth and education Channing was a rationalist and clung to the philosophical traditions of the conservatives—the sensuous philosophy of Locke; by nature he was an idealist and sympathized with the views of the radicals. [3] That he welcomed and assimilated much of the spirit of German idealism is attested by his biographer in the following statement: [4]

"Nothing characterized him more than the youthful eagerness with which he greeted the advent of every newly discovered truth. He was 'not a watcher by the tomb, but a man of the resurrection'. He lived in the mountain air of hope. And at this period of his life he was breathing in the freshness with which the whole intellect of Christendom seemed inspired, as it pressed onward across the wide prairie which the science, philosophy, poetry, and revolutionary tendencies of the age had

[1] From the text, Prove all things; hold fast that which is good (I Thes. V, 21); cf. *Works of Channing,* 367ff.

[2] *Life of Channing,* 276.

[3] Cf. Frothingham, *Transcendentalism,* 110.

[4] *Life of Channing,* 274f.

opened. It was with intense delight that he made acquaintance with the master minds of Germany, through the medium, first, of Madame de Staël, and afterwards of Coleridge. He recognized in them his leaders. In Kant's doctrine of the Reason he found confirmation of the views which, in early years received from Price, had quickened him to ever deeper reverence of the essential powers of man. To Schelling's sublime intimations of the Divine life everywhere manifested through nature and humanity, his heart, devoutly conscious of the universal agency of God, gladly responded. But above all did the heroic stoicism of Fichte charm him by its full assertion of the grandeur of the human will. Without adopting the system of either of these philosophers, and, fortunately perhaps for him, without being fully acquainted with these systems, he yet received from their examples the most animating incentives to follow out the paths of speculation into which his own mind had entered."

In addition to the foregoing statement that Channing was introduced to German thought by Mme. de Staël, and that his interest in it was greatly stimulated by Coleridge and Carlyle, it is said [1] that he gained still more knowledge of it through the medium of Margaret Fuller, who often translated for him passages from the works of such writers as De Wette, Herder, and Goethe. This is all true, but it is not the whole truth. It is safe to say that he learned from Mme. de Staël very little German philosophy itself. Although he had met Coleridge personally in 1822 and had prior to that time been introduced to the transcendental philosophers of Germany through the medium of short extracts contained in the "Biographia Literaria,"[2] it is probable that he did not derive much knowledge on the subject from Coleridge until James Marsh republished in this country the Aids to Reflection in 1829. The first information he received from Carlyle was from the latter's essays on Goethe and German literature, which began to appear in the Edinburgh Review in 1827. From Margaret Fuller he received

[1] *Memoirs of Margaret Fuller,* I, 175f.

[2] Cf. Miss Peabody's *Reminiscences of Channing,* 76.

no aid until 1836. As early as the winter of 1826-'27, however, Follen had become a welcome guest at his home and at once entered into close intellectual intercourse with him, discussing with him questions pertaining to German literature, theology, and philosophy—a fact which seems to have been overlooked by those who have written on the Transcendental movement in New England.

In the autumn of 1826 Follen was invited to attend an informal gathering of Sunday School teachers who met fortnightly in Dr. Channing's study to discuss the subject of religious education. This was his first personal acquaintance with Channing and the beginning of a warm, abiding friendship with him. To Miss Peabody we are indebted for a vivid description [1] of this meeting. According to her account the subject of the evening was the significance of the death of Christ. During a pause in the discussion Channing, in glancing around the room filled with people, observed Follen quite hidden behind the rest, and with a desire to draw him out, to see perhaps if there was anything in him worth hearing, asked him whether he had anything to say on the subject. Being extremely modest he blushed deeply and hesitated for an instant, but then arose and proceeded with great simplicity and earnestness, in a speech worded with the greatest felicity of expression, to state the views of Christ's death which had made him a Christian. Miss Peabody observes that the audience sat quite entranced at his exceedingly individual and impressive narration of his deep inner experience: "Dr. Channing was entirely absorbed, his countenance growing brighter at every word. He saw he had struck a mine, for here was a man whose religion was not an inheritance, nor an imitation, nor a convention of society, but the covenant of a consciously finite being with God. From that moment was cemented a friendship that never had a shadow of misunderstanding fall upon it, but was a perfect mutual respect and tender love."

Follen was a great acquisition to these meetings as his biographer observes: "His free and independent thought, and the frank, fearless expression of his opinions, encouraged

[1] Ibid., 213ff.; also *Sprague's Annals,* VIII, 544ff.

others to think and speak freely; while his unaffected respect for the views of others, and the place of a learner, which his modesty always led him to take for himself, made him the model of all. When he spoke of spiritual realities, of his faith in a future life, everyone felt that he spoke of what he believed, and that immortality had already commenced in him." [1] He made such a favorable impression upon his new friends that he was urged to enter the ministry, and after a short consideration of the matter made known to Dr. Channing his decision to accept the call. One must not conclude, however, that this step was especially due to the importunities of his friends. During his first year in Cambridge he had become acquainted with the Unitarian movement and found that it showed phases and tendencies which coincided in the main with those ideals which he had brought with him from Germany. Here then was the opportunity to proceed with his plan for religious reform which he had sketched in his letter to Sartorius the previous year. He now took up the matter with Dr. Channing, receiving from him much sympathetic aid and friendly counsel for his preparation.

In December of this same year (1826) he wrote to his father as follows: [2] "Channing is the most distinguished preacher in the United States and stands at the head of the Unitarians, that is, of that religious sect, who regard Christ as a divinely inspired, perfect man, and who reject the Trinity. To this doctrine belong the best informed men of this State; and it was very delightful to Dr. Channing to learn through me, that a great number of German Lutherans thought with him. I have had much conversation with him, especially on philosophical subjects, and we agree about them in all essential particulars. He is, besides, my very warm friend, and the firmest spiritual stay and staff which I have here."

Follen and Channing kept in constant touch either in person or by correspondence. The letters which they exchanged during the summer of 1827 indicate their deep regard

[1] *Works,* I, 172.

[2] Ibid., I, 167.

for each other as also the mutual benefit which they derived from their intimate association. While absent in New York, in May, Channing wrote to Follen concerning the death of the latter's friend and compatriot, Dr. Bardili, in that city, closing his letter as follows:[1] "This event may be used by us to confirm in us that spirit of self-sacrifice, of which we have so often spoken. When we see what a vapor life is, how suddenly dissolved, we should dismiss our anxiety about prolonging it, and count that man the most privileged, who, instead of wasting it in efforts to escape its end, offers it up freely in the cause of God and man, of freedom and religion. I owe to you some interesting views on this subject, and hope to renew our conversation on my return."

To this letter Follen replied in July. Two short passages of his letter[2] concerning immortality and the Deity may be quoted here: "It is gratifying to my feelings that my friend, before his death, has seen you, and beheld in your eyes the reflection of that look of love which was soon to welcome him to heaven. There, in a wider sphere of exertion and enjoyment, I hope to meet him again, with many of those privileged of men who, 'instead of wasting their life in efforts to escape its end, have offered it up freely in the cause of God and man, of freedom and religion.' I hope to meet him there, if my exertions do not fall short of my ardent desire to keep, as Milton says, in tune with heaven. And in this respect I owe to you, my most excellent friend, much more than I am capable of expressing. * * * There are several theological subjects concerning which I desire your opinion and advice. But my mind is now unfortunately so much distracted with different occupations, that all my attempts at writing down a series of thoughts prove unsuccessful. Yet, while the minor faculties of the mind are engaged in transitory pursuits, the deepest and fondest exertions of my soul are directed to that universal Mind, which is revealed in the creation and in the highest results of inspired wisdom. The more my mind presses on

[1] Ibid., I, 174.

[2] Ibid., I, 175ff.

toward that all-seeing Light, so much the more its warmth expands and attracts my heart, as if to assure me, that wisdom and love, as well as light and warmth, flow from the same eternal source." This somewhat pantheistic conception of God along with his warmth of religious feeling shows again the influence of Schleiermacher.

At the close of the letter Follen expresses a desire to spend the month of August with Channing at Newport, where the latter was taking his summer vacation, in order to receive some assistance from him on a series of lectures on religion which he was preparing. To this Channing replied as follows:[1] "I thank you for your kind letter. It was, of course, gratifying to me. To know that I have contributed at all to the peace and progress of such a mind as yours is a great happiness. I wish you to feel that you have paid your debt. My interviews with you have been highly interesting; and I owe to them views and impressions, which have quickened and enriched my mind."

Channing procured lodgings for Follen near his own and gladly welcomed his arrival. The vacation was spent in the closest friendly association, in walks and drives and scholarly discussions. "He has often spoken to me," says Follen's biographer,[2] "of the high enjoyment he derived from the free, intimate communion he had this summer with his friend, Dr. Channing. The highest and holiest subjects were the themes of their conversation. They often took very different views. But as truth, not victory, was ever their object their differences of opinion served to shed more light upon the mind of each, and to add another charm to their affectionate and happy intercourse."

In the autumn of 1827 the teacher's meetings at Dr. Channing's were resumed and Follen was always present as one of the leaders in the discussion of the evening. Through their close association during the summer vacation Channing began to recognize more clearly than ever that Follen was no

[1] Ibid., I, 178.

[2] Ibid., I, 179.

ordinary man, and from this time on the latter was a regular visitor at his home. About this time Follen began to keep a diary, which he continued for a period of nearly four months, recording many of his conversations and discussions with some of the main leaders of the Unitarian movement. His biographer has given us some "extracts" [1] from this journal with the statement that much has been withheld from publication on account of its personal nature. If the complete record were available it would perhaps throw much new light upon Follen's importance for the development of later Unitarianism, but the "extracts" alone indicate to some extent what an important role he was playing in the intellectual life of Cambridge, apart from his activity as instructor in German in the College. This incomplete record from November 5th to February 26th shows that in addition to attending the regular fortnightly meetings at Dr. Channing's, Follen spent on the average at least one evening per week with him in private discussion of religious, philosophical, and sociological subjects. Among the questions discussed such as the following may be mentioned: The personality of God; the nature of Christ; immortality; free agency; moral and religious education; Christianity as a particular form of religion; religious instruction of children; the value of imaginative literature and of fiction in general on the education of children; Schiller's idea of the cooperation of kindred minds for the discovery of truth. Besides discussing such subjects in general Channing often requested Follen to read to him from such works as Foster's Rise and Progress of Religion, Tennemann's History of Philosophy, and de Gerando's discussion of Kant's idealism. Many of these discussions gave Follen the opportunity, as the diary shows, to present not only the views of the greatest German minds, but to advance arguments of his own, some of which were new and interesting to Channing. One of the last entries in the diary shows that Channing decided under the inspiration of these discussions to study German.

The benefits derived from this close intellectual communion were of course mutual. It is quite probable that Channing

[1] Ibid., I, 182ff.

learned as much from Follen as the latter did from the former. It seems that a man like Channing would hardly have spent his valuable time one evening a week with Follen if the latter had not had something valuable to offer him. No one in Boston, not even in America, had at that time so broad a grasp on the modern system of German theology and philosophy as Follen, and it was probably to this rich fund of knowledge and its liberating spirit that Channing was attracted.[1] Although we have no record on which to rely, there is no reason to suppose that these private discussions were ever discontinued, for both lived near each other and remained intimate friends until Follen's death. Miss Peabody, who at that time usually spent her evenings at Channing's, observes[2] that she heard the two men talk together a great deal, and that while they often took very different views on special subjects they agreed on general principles. Although Channing, as we have seen, had become interested in German thought he seems to have been somewhat suspicious of it until after he came in contact with Follen, for according to Ripley[3] he cautiously advised William Emerson in 1823 to study at Cambridge rather than at Göttingen since he believed that so far as moral influence and religious feeling were concerned a New England minister could obtain the best education at Cambridge. Between this date and the time he met Follen Channing had access to no other sources of information concerning German thought than he already possessed, but after a year's intellectual intercourse with Follen, perhaps far more extensive than the diary and correspondence indicate, Channing had become so greatly interested in German philosophy that he decided at the age of 48 to study the German language in order to gain a first-hand knowledge of German thought.

The purpose of this whole discussion is to show simply

[1] In her *Reminiscences of Channing,* 301, Miss Peabody states explicitly that Channing unaffectedly regarded Follen as his superior in learning and Christian character.

[2] Cf. *Sprague's Annals,* VIII, 546.

[3] Cf. Frothingham, *Life of George Ripley,* 20f.

that if Channing actually recognized the master minds of Germany as his leaders, as his biographer asserts, Follen was in all probability one of the important sources of his information concerning their teachings. Although no attempt is made here to show that Follen in any way changed Channing's mature thought,[1] it seems reasonable to assume, however, that he did to some extent influence some of his later views. At any rate John White Chadwick, one of Channing's biographers and a man of critical insight and fine literary sense, speaks thus:[2] "I have seemed to find in Channing's later thought more of Follen's than of any other personal influence. Those tendencies in his preaching which were deplored as transcendental were quite surely, in some measure, developments of germs which fell into his own from Follen's fruitful mind."

The diary shows also that Follen associated intimately with other Unitarian leaders, such as Ware, Palfrey, Peabody, Higginson, and others, discussing with them theology, philosophy, and literature, and stimulating their interest in his broad, enlightened views on religion and ethics.

James Freeman Clarke, another of the great Unitarian leaders, owed his enthusiasm for German thought in some measure at least to Follen. He entered Harvard in 1825, the year before Follen began to teach German there, and was graduated with the class of 1829. He then entered the Divinity School and for another year was in direct touch with Follen. Clarke's high tribute to Follen, which has been quoted in the preceding chapter, may be taken as an expression of the general esteem in which he was held by at least some of the leaders of the Transcendental movement and an acknowledgment of his influence upon them.

As teacher of ethics in the Theological School Follen's sphere of influence was greatly increased, for this position not only brought him into closer relation with many prominent Unitarians outside of college circles, but also into close touch

[1] Follen wrote to Beck that Channing was always ready to accept the views of others if he found them better than his own. *Works*, I, 284.

[2] *William Ellery Channing*, 383.

with many of the theological students, who were afterwards to become prominent leaders of the new movement.

* * * * * *

While the radical wing of the Unitarians hailed the great influx of German writings, the conservatives began to look askance at these philosophical and religious teachings, regarding them as contaminating and irreligious, and gradually arraying themselves against them. As this antagonism grew Follen sought in private and in public to dispel this erroneous notion. In his Inaugural Address he defends German philosophy as follows: 'While German speculation has in its attempts to solve the riddle of the universe produced some definite and important results its greatest value consists in the unwearied and never-satisfied striving of the mind to fathom and comprehend itself and that whole of which itself is only a portion. Jacob, who wrestled with the angel, bearing off in his lameness a revelation of omnipotence, is the true emblem of German philosophy. It is valuable chiefly as mental gymnastics to methodically unfold, invigorate, and refine the powers of the mind. Its genius is a spirit of laborious, thorough-going investigation into the nature of things,—an attempt to survey the whole region of faith and doubt, to investigate the origin and elements of all science, to analyze every conception and idea which we formulate in the domain of truth. This spirit of free inquiry has often been accused of a tendency to materialism and skepticism and to a denial of those spiritual realities which form the foundation of the Christian faith—the soul of man and the soul of the universe; but the fact is, that while the whole school of modern philosophy, both the French and the English, are advocates of materialism, the records of German philosophy from Leibnitz to Kant and his disciples do not exhibit the name of a single materialist or absolute skeptic. This phenomenon is not due to lack of freedom in expressing opinions different from those laid down by established creeds supported by government or by popular opinion, for in no country is there so much liberty in the profession of philosophical and religious opinions since the Reformation as in

Germany. The cause of this freedom is to be found in the very character itself of German philosophy, namely its loyalty to spiritual truth and its tendency to universal comprehensiveness. The philosophical tendency of the German mind has had a decided influence on every department of learning. Every branch of science from the highest to the lowest, from the works on religion and morality to those of agriculture and forestry are characterized by the same scientific method. It is to this faithful workmanship and exact painstaking method in literary criticism especially that the excellence of German literature is largely due.'

After this brief defense of German philosophy Follen added a few pertinent remarks on the progress of religious science in Germany: 'German scholars were especially preeminent,' he points out, 'in the fields of ecclesiastical history and biblical criticism. Nowhere have the primary and vital truths of divinity been so fully acknowledged and scientifically established as in the works of German philosophers and theologians such as Herder and Jacobi. These men conceive of religion not as a set of precepts inculcated by the church or the school, but as a native and indistructible principle of the heart; and theology not as the arbitrary fabric of a dogmatic and philosophizing imagination, but as the knowledge of the essence and source of all reality, the ultimate result of the most thorough study of nature and of man. Upon almost every doctrinal point there is a great variety of individual opinion, hence every theological work published must be considered as the author's own opinion and not the statements of any select group of people. Out of respect for the rights of individual judgment and for the spirit of free inquiry the public is inclined to hold in esteem every one whose conduct is marked by a sense of truth, justice, and benevolence, whatever be his religious sentiments; hence in expressing his own peculiar views, every one thinks chiefly of what seems true to himself and not of what he may gain or lose in society by a frank profession of his views. This freedom of thought has caused many to place the stamp of skepticism upon German theology, but unbelief in spiritual realities is really not indigen-

ous to the German mind. Even those who reject the historical facts of Christianity still embrace its spiritual essence; hence they cannot be classed as skeptics like the followers of Hume. Every German who has only a general acquaintance with the history of philosophy and who listens to the voices of the living and dead, speaking to him through their works, feels himself girt about by a host of witnesses to the reality and eternity of things not seen. If faith is the groundwork and if love, or a vital interest in perfection, in truth, goodness, and beauty, is the soul of religion, then it may be said that everyone who has enjoyed a German education has had his mind nurtured in religion and in it has lived and moved and had his being.'

It is not improbable that this defense of German theologians in the Inaugural Address, of which Ripley wrote an enthusiastic review in the Christian Examiner,[1] was the first inspiration to Ripley for his defense of Schleiermacher and De Wette against the charge of atheism made by Professor Norton.

VIEWS ON RELIGION.

Follen gave an exposition of his theory of the nature of religion partly in his lectures on moral philosophy and partly in a series of tracts[2] published in 1836. In his attempt to trace religion to its foundation he made use of no external authority, but appealed only to such facts as come under the observation of everyone who, as he said, uses his senses and reason. He addressed himself to no particular class of persons, but to all observing, thinking men and women in general, whether they regarded religion as the source of good or of evil, as a reality or a delusion, as a remarkable phenomenon of history or as a principle implanted in human nature. He did not advocate or oppose any particular creed or form of worship, for he was in full sympathy with everyone who refused assent to any system of faith that did not satisfy the enquiring mind. While his reason compelled him to reject the

[1] Vol. XI (1832).

[2] Given in *Works,* V, 254-313.

religious dogmas peculiar to each creed he had a deep religious sympathy for all, for he recognized in every form of faith, even in the fearless freedom of sincere skepticism the same vital principle. He maintained that the advocates of different systems should join in searching for this fundamental element of religion instead of fixing upon and defending against each other points upon which they disagree.

In answer to the question concerning the true essence of religion Follen replies[1] that it is a peculiar universal element of human nature; the highest manifestation of that principle of progress which we observe in the different orders of beings throughout creation. Not only in those systems which are supported by experience and sound analogical reasoning, but also in those which are not consistent with facts established by observation and history Follen sees the essential tendency of man to look beyond the finite in search of the infinite; and it is this impulse toward perfection, this tendency of human nature toward the infinite, that he considers the true substance of religion. The true religious principle, as he expresses it,[2] may be likened to the science of astronomy or of chemistry, while the different systems of faith in which it is garbed are as unstable as the dreams of astrology or the vagaries of alchemy. To use Follen's figure, the savage worships the rolling stone ascribing its motion to an indwelling power which his credulity has personified, but the scientist explains the motion as the necessary effect of gravitation. Since the savage and the philosopher worship the same mysterious power that is manifest in the rolling stone and in the system of rolling worlds, it is clear, Follen concludes, that true religion does not consist in the object of faith, but in the principle of faith.

The true element of religion like that of morality is, according to Follen's conception,[3] the innate desire of man for the greatest happiness, but this desire, as he points out, does not identify religion with morality; it shows merely that both

[1] Ibid., 286f.

[2] Ibid., V, 270f.

[3] Cf. Lectures, *Works,* III, 225f.

rest upon the same foundation. Morality, he explains, is the direction of the mind toward that happiness which results from a striving after the greatest efficiency, after perfection, while religion is the direction of the mind toward the happiness which results from the desire and belief that the world is so constituted and governed as to make possible the greatest perfection. The attainment of perfection depends not only upon man himself, upon his faculties and moral effort, but also partly, as Follen understands it, upon Providence, upon the power which has created the universe in such a way that man is aided in his striving after it. Man's desire and belief that the world be so organized and directed as to conform to his wants and needs is then, according to Follen's view, the foundation of religion, and from this desire and belief proceeds his restless striving after an ever-enlarging sphere of existence and action. Whether a person believes that this providential direction of the world is vested in the eternal laws of nature, in a polytheistic control, or in one supreme Deity who controls the course of events in such a way as to enable man to form his own character and to become the author of his own happiness or misery; or whether he believes this providential agency is independent of man's effort and must be secured by prayers or the magic power of priests,—all these various beliefs are only different forms of the same principle. The moral man, as Follen explains it, is like the husbandman who expects the harvest as a result of his own painstaking efforts in preparing the soil and sowing the seed; but the religious man recognizes that the seed sown will not yield the desired harvest unless sunshine and rain are sent by the Almighty's hand. From this standpoint religion is a feeling of dependence on God for physical and spiritual laws which will enable man to exercise all his faculties for the attainment of divine perfection, and which will give free scope to his natural tendency toward the infinite.

On the whole it may be said that Follen considers religion not as theological speculation, not as belief in dogmas, nor as moral actions, but as a pious contemplation of the harmonious workings of the universe; as a natural impulse toward and a

reverent feeling of dependence on the Infinite Spirit in whom we live and move and have our being—a view [1] quite in harmony with the doctrine of Schleiermacher. From Schleiermacher he accepts the view that religion is an innate principle of the soul, a feeling for the infinite, a sense of dependence on God. The orthodox party considered religion as an abstract doctrine for the promotion of morals; Kant considered morals as the basis of religion; but Follen like Schleiermacher maintains that although religion and morals are essentially connected and have a common foundation in human nature, they are nevertheless independent of each other. One of the greatest merits of Follen's system is the doctrine of the social nature of religion. He considers the church not as an instrument for moral education, but as an association of people seeking after religious truth through the mutual exchange of religious views. Since religious ideas are reflections of religious feelings, he believed that the greater the variety of them the better, since each individual is in this way more apt to find that which will satisfy his own peculiar needs.

While Follen's lectures on ethics and religion show the influence of Kant, Fichte, Schiller, Fries and Schleiermacher, they contain features also which demonstrate his originality as a thinker. On the whole they are a prophecy of freedom from beginning to end. It is to be presumed, however, that Follen did far more in his private conversations and in his two years' instruction in the Divinity School to promote a knowledge of German philosophical thought than he was able to do in his series of popular lectures. His broad and liberal interpretation of the New Testament, his doctrine of the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, moral freedom, the dignity of human nature, the incarnation of God in humanity, which is always progressing toward perfection, toward the divine life to come, must have made a deep impression upon those students who were later to enter into the new religious movement, tending to liberate them from the bondage of Calvinistic

[1] Follen was doubtlessly influenced in his religious views by Benjamin Constant's work on religion as indicated by quotations from this work in *Works*, III, 229f., and V, 255. In the *American Quarterly Review* (March, 1832) he gave a lengthy exposition of Constant's work.

theology and to inspire them with a sense of inner freedom. In his eulogy on Follen, W. H. Channing, one of the notable Transcendentalists, speaks as follows [1] concerning his influence upon Harvard students: "It may be safely said that no young man ever passed through his classes without imbibing as by moral contagion, self-respect, honorable ambition, and courtesy. To many he gave the key to the richest tongue of modern times, and awakened a desire to explore and work the virgin mines of thought and feeling which that language opened up to them." Thus Follen was able to contribute in some measure to the preparation of the soil from which was to spring the religious movement of which he had vaguely dreamed.

In addition to his lectures on Ethics and Religion Follen gave publicity to his religious thought through the medium of the Christian Teacher's Manual [2] also, one of the first Sunday School publications in New England. Although the articles in the Manual are all anonymous, there is both external and internal evidence that Follen was the author of many of them. The preface of the first volume, written by Follen,[3] states that the aim of the Manual is to assist both teachers and parents in their duties as religious instructors by providing them with such material and views as they might not otherwise be able to procure. Exchange of views, mutual cooperation for the discovery of knowledge, as Follen learned from Schiller, was the main object. Follen points out here that former attempts at religious instruction had not been accomodated to the minds of children, and that much light was needed on a subject so important to the young and to the interests of society. He wished to see religious feeling awakened in the church with all dogmatic views excluded. He advocated that the material for religious instruction should be taken chiefly from the works of God. His method was to lead the minds of the children to a knowledge and love of the universal Father by a study of the order and beauty of Nature. His aim was here

[1] *Christian Examiner,* XXXIII, 52ff.

[2] Edited by Mrs. Follen, Boston, April, 1828—April, 1830.

[3] Cf. Follen's diary, *Works,* I, 240.

as in his lectures to show that religion and morals are closely connected; to make the teachers realize and through them to make the children feel that every time they were faithful to what is considered duty, every time they had a generous thought, every time they denied themselves anything from an idea of right, every time they obeyed conscience they pleased and obeyed God. Harangues on duty and explanation of scriptures, he emphasizes, have little effect on character or in calling forth religious feeling, but it is the incipient whispers of conscience that must be held as laws of conduct.

In various articles upon such questions as the subject-matter of lessons, the method to be pursued, requisites of religious teachers, lessons on the mind, the use and authority of reason in religious instruction, etc., Follen addressed himself to the Sunday School teachers, advocating the Pestalozzian principles of education, the Kantian and Fichtean systems of ethics, and Schleiermacher's doctrines of religion. It is not too much to presume that in this way he gave to a class of people outside of academic circles some insight at least into German thought. There are also in the Manual sketches of Herder's, Luther's, and Claudius' writings, which quite probably came from Follen's pen.

CHARACTER AND INFLUENCE AS A PREACHER.

From his youth Follen, as we have seen, had taken the deepest interest in questions pertaining to religion and morals, and his whole education had fitted him to become a religious teacher. With a heart full of love for humanity he was not content to devote his entire energy to the teaching of language and literature in Harvard, but desired a still broader sphere of influence in which to instruct his fellow men in the more momentous truths concerning the nature and destiny of man. This was his reason for entering the ministry.

In his loving contemplation of the wondrous harmony of the universe he recognized the essential relation of man to the external world. Thus impressed with the dignity of human nature he not only reverenced the divinity of his own soul, but

was inspired with a deep love for all mankind because he considered them the children of God. The nobility and immortality of the human soul was the central thought of his whole philosophic and religious interest; and the conception of man as a free moral agent, created to attain perfection, was the guiding principle of all his thinking as well as the abiding doctrine of his whole life. The emphasis which he placed upon the inherent nobility of human nature and the inalienable rights of the soul to free development toward perfection was in direct opposition to Calvinistic theology. In his extreme religious individualism he placed more confidence in truth as expressed by the conscience of the individual than in any external authority; hence he believed that the free spirit of man should not be bound by tradition, but that all dogmas and theories, whether social, political, or religious, should be tested by human reason and sentiment alone. He taught men to look at the world as it is without reference to dogmas and creeds; to see beauty everywhere; to seek God in nature and in their own souls; to make a heaven on earth, and to think of immortality as beginning here and now. This was a new way of looking at life, a new faith, a new religious belief quite different from the formalism and moralizing that gave the religious life of the time its chief stamp.

The purpose of the Christian ministry, as he conceived it,[1] is not to develop the religious character of men, but merely to aid them in its formation and to stimulate them in increasing their own exertions and responsibilities. To this end he applied himself diligently to the study of nature, theology, the Bible, and the life of Christ for the acquisition of exalting truth. He looked upon nature, especially human nature, as a temple of religious truth and used the Bible as a key to decipher the teachings inscribed upon its walls. His was no time-serving ministry. In his public services he spoke the truth as he felt it in his heart, and delivered his message as if he believed in its infinite importance. The main characteristic of his preaching was complete independence in thought and ex-

[1] *Works*, I, 494f.

pression. He was guided not by the likes and dislikes of his hearers, but by the consideration of what he deemed important for the formation of their religious character. A fearless, manly character, he gave clear and powerful expression to whatever he apprehended as truth, whether his hearers could accept it or not, confessing his doubts and beliefs regardless of the prejudices and opinions of his audience, often at the risk of his popularity and office. He was undaunted by the authority of any man; and although he had the greatest respect for the views of others, no consideration could restrain him from opposing firmly though courteously any traditional opinion which he conscientiously believed contrary to truth and justice, whether advocated by friend or foe. In order to make the broadest appeal he adapted his arguments to the capacities and wants of all, saint and sinner, believer or skeptic. Follen was a practical exponent of the views which he held concerning the duties of a Christian minister. He was actuated by a desire not merely to impart knowledge, but to unite his fellow men by a bond of love and fellowship; to make them feel that religion was not a mere speculation, but a living reality. In his private intercourse he was a man among men. As a spiritual guide he quickened the religious life of his people as much by his friendly social intercourse as by his intellectual powers, entering sympathetically into all their joys and sorrows, visiting the sick and afflicted and administering to the poor and needy. It was this genuine respect and love for men that made him so influential as a minister of the Gospel.

As a religious teacher Follen no doubt reached the climax of his influence during his ministry in New York. Besides his regular pastoral duties he gave his attention to all philanthropic enterprises and cooperated heartily with all benevolent associations so far as they appealed to his conscience. He gave also several courses of lectures on Unitarianism, another on the Domestic and Social Relations, one on German literature, and before the Brooklyn Lyceum a discourse upon Republicanism and Slavery.[1] These lectures made a deep im-

[1] Cf. *Works*, I, 462, 481, 473.

pression upon the intellectual circles of New York, and they received such favorable comment in the papers that he was invited to deliver the course on Unitarianism in Washington. This he did, preaching with such power and eloquence that he was offered the pastorate of the Unitarian Society in that city. But one of the greatest services that he rendered to the cause of liberal Christianity was to deliver a series of lectures[1] on the subject of Infidelity. As already noted, there was in New England at the beginning of the nineteenth century a general tendency to skepticism. This moral revolt against the spiritual bondage which the harsher features of Calvinism had imposed upon the minds of reasonable men was especially pronounced in New York, while Thomas Paine's "Age of Reason" and Fanny Wright's lectures had tended also to breed a spirit of general unbelief in all religious values. In his youth Follen had passed triumphantly through this same experience and knew how to sympathize with men who were struggling with doubts and unbelief. Imbued with a love of free and independent thought and desirous of aiding his fellow men in their progress toward perfection, he eagerly grasped this opportunity to present his views on religion and at the same time do justice to the so-called infidels. He knew that skepticism usually grows out of an earnest desire to be assured of the rational foundations of faith; therefore he maintained that it is as unjust to accuse a man of willful unbelief as to accuse a man of dishonesty, who, in casting up an account, makes an error disadvantageous to himself. He believed that honest skepticism must of necessity precede a reasonable faith; that both the individual and society can make intellectual and spiritual progress only by a free exchange of thought and a mutual confession of doubt.[2]

In the course of these lectures, as excerpts in his works show, he gave a discussion of the English Deists, the French Encyclopædists, Thomas Paine, and Fanny Wright, pointing out what he considered the false grounds and inconsistencies

[1] Excerpts of these lectures are given in *Works*, I, 445ff.

[2] Ibid., I, 446.

upon which unbelievers base their arguments, and from passages in the "Age of Reason" proving to his own satisfaction that even Thomas Paine believed in God and immortality. He maintained that it is not only a duty but also advantageous to the unbeliever to examine the objections to Christianity, for any difficulty left unexamined would lead to doubt, whereas careful investigation might lead to conviction. Since his own belief in the divine truth of the Gospel had been promoted by studying the books written against it, he believed that a free and fair investigation of Christianity would open up an infinite sphere to free inquiry and thereby lead to a true and abiding faith. He characterized Christianity as a sublime philosophy adapted to the understanding of the child yet transcending the wisdom of the sage; as a system whose scientific character makes it one of the most efficient checks to imposition and blind credulity, and which should therefore neither be adopted nor rejected without earnest mental effort. The fact that the Bible teaches immortality, he says,[1] is no reason why one should not seek other evidence of this doctrine, for God has endowed man with an infinite desire to extend his knowledge, and unless he makes use of his intellect he can never feel that there is no reason for doubting. Follen told his audiences plainly that he could see no irreverence in questioning the doctrine of the Gospel, for to him it seemed that there could be no basis for an abiding belief in its truth unless its fundamental teachings could stand the test of reason; unless its principles could be considered a subject of free interpretation rather than a mere matter of fact and history. The Bible, he maintained,[2] gives us only the means of arriving at truth, not truth itself, for "Man finds the law and the prophets in his own soul."

In these lectures Follen gave such a liberal and reasonable interpretation of the Bible and Christianity, and was so fair in his treatment of the skeptics, that many of them were made to see that they had been at variance not with religion, but with Calvinistic theology, and were thus converted to the cause of

[1] Ibid., I, 448.

[2] Ibid., I, 449.

liberal Christianity. The general effect of these lectures was so far-reaching that a movement was soon set on foot to establish a great free church in New York with Follen as its pastor.[1] It was one of Follen's fondest hopes to found a church upon what he considered the true Christian principle: that of universal brotherhood; a church whose doors should be open alike to Jew and Gentile, to believers and unbelievers, —to all whose creed was toleration and universal love, to all who were in search of truth. His object was to introduce a more truly social worship and to have the whole congregation enter into all devotional exercises. He wished also to place women on an equality with men, and to encourage everyone to speak from the pulpit according to his or her gifts. For a time it seemed probable that the project would be carried out, but for want of sufficient encouragement it finally came to naught.

The last two years of Follen's ministry were spent in and near Boston. Here he repeated his lectures on Infidelity, and on two different occasions delivered a series of lectures on the history of Pantheism. The question of the relation between God and the world,—whether there is a God of nature or whether nature is God, was a subject to which he had devoted years of faithful study. Although he was hardly in sympathy with the pantheistic tendency of the new school of theology, with which he fully identified himself, he believed that a fair discussion of the subject would be a real aid to the cause of true religion. During these two years he took part also in the meetings of the Transcendental Club as indicated by the following extract from a letter [2] to Miss Martineau in December, 1838: "I have lately attended a meeting of some of the leaders of the new school of Unitarians. A clear determination to break loose from the Unitarian orthodoxy, and a vague conception of something greater and better with marked individuality of opinion and mutual respect, characterized the discussion." He made another effort also to carry out his plan

[1] Cf. *Works,* I, 496.

[2] Ibid., I, 506.

for a free church on broad, unsectarian principles, but the time was not yet ripe for the full realization of the projected religious reform which hovered before his eyes.

At the beginning of his ministry Follen carefully wrote out his sermons, but gradually discarded this practice, sometimes writing them out in part, again writing only an outline, and often preaching entirely extempore. He did not move his audience by a passionate appeal, but held their attention by his earnestness, logic, and wealth of profound thoughts.[1] By many he was considered metaphysical and abstract, and those who did not attempt to follow his train of reasoning called his sermons uninteresting. A perusal of his printed sermons bears out the statement of his biographer that the thought which he put into one discourse was sufficient to furnish the ordinary preacher with material for a dozen sermons. The clearness with which he sought to unfold his subject sometimes made the statement of his thoughts dry, but his manner was always eloquent. Dr. Peabody,[2] who often heard him preach, characterizes his sermons as "instructive and impressive, weighty in thought, full fraught with devotional feeling, written in a style both full and simple, and delivered with solemnity and earnestness though without oratorical adornment." W. H. Channing[3] considered him most successful in his extempore addresses, characterizing him in the following words: "The thought seemed to pour from deep inward stores in language made fluent by his fervor; accordingly great beauty of fancy played over the surface of his arguments." As he gained in experience he became less abstruse, holding the interest of his hearer by his direct personal appeal. He never dogmatized, but made the reason and conscience of the individual stand at

[1] Cf. Letter of Rev. George F. Simmons in *Sprague's Annals,* VIII, 544.

[2] *Harvard Reminiscences,* 121; Peabody remarks also that Follen's failure to pronounce the th-sound was the only peculiarity of utterance that would have betrayed him as a foreigner; that his use of English was as free from solecisms and inaccuracies as if it had been his vernacular.

[3] *Christian Examiner,* XXXIII, 53f.

the bar in witness of the truths he proclaimed. He aroused men to do themselves justice and to learn the wealth of their own experience. "No one can have listened to his preaching," says James Freeman Clarke,[1] "without honoring the man and feeling the power of the truth, which he dispensed so much according to the spirit." The clear, chaste style, the interesting subject matter, and the deep moral earnestness of his discourses caused Judge Cranch of Washington to speak of him as a perfect model of pulpit eloquence.[2] The few sermons which he committed to writing form one volume of his published works. These show a wide range of subjects with abundant illustrations drawn from common life, and are written in a style of pungent directness and unaffected pathos. The one golden note which rings throughout every discourse, the one theme on which Follen loves to dwell, is that of Freedom and Immortality,—the tendency of the human mind to infinite progress and its capability of approaching continuously, through moral action and religious feeling, to divine perfection.

* * * * * *

Although Riley seems inclined to believe that the views of Emerson, the chief representative of Transcendental thought in America, were for the most part original, he speaks nevertheless about the transcendental movement as a whole as follows:[3] "It may safely be said that the German influence on American thought has been the most significant and the most weighty of all foreign forces. This is due in large measure to the after effect of that great epoch of German humanism systematized by the names of Goethe and Kant, Schiller and Fichte. The very substance of the life-work of these men and their company consisted in this, that they replaced the ecclesiastical doctrine of atonement by the belief in the saving quality of restless striving. * * * They trusted in the essential goodness of all life; they conceived of the uni-

[1] *Western Messenger,* October, 1836.

[2] *Works,* I, 444.

[3] *American Thought,* 229ff.

verse as a spiritual being, engaged in constant self-revelation and in a constant struggle toward higher forms of existence." The discussion in the foregoing pages is an attempt to show in some measure that this was the very doctrine that Follen brought with him from Germany in 1824, and which he proclaimed on every occasion, both in his teaching and preaching, in public and in private, in his intercourse with the learned men of Boston and with the Harvard students who were later to become the leaders of the new movement.

Upon its introduction into New England, as Frothingham testifies, the transcendental philosophy took root and blossomed out in every form of social life, becoming thus a highly important factor in shaping our national life. To use his exact words:[1] "It affected thinkers, swayed politicians, guided moralists, inspired philanthropists, created reformers. The moral enthusiasm which broke out with such prodigious power in the holy war against slavery; which uttered such earnest protests against capital punishment, and the wrongs inflicted on women; which made such passionate pleading in behalf of the weak, the injured, the disfranchised of every race and condition; which exalted humanity above institutions, and proclaimed the inherent worth of men,—owed, in larger measure than is suspected, its glow and force to the Transcendentalists."

If the views of such writers as Frothingham and Riley are correct; if New England Transcendentalism was a new way of looking at the world and the facts of human existence; if it was a call for immediate application of ideas to life; and especially if it owed its origin, in some measure, to German thought; then as one of the earliest interpreters of German romantic literature and the German systems of philosophy in this country, and as an active leader in the important reform movements of the time Follen was not only from the metaphysical but also from the practical standpoint at least a harbinger if not one of the earliest pioneers of the movement.

[1] *Transcendentalism in New England,* Preface Vf.

CHAPTER III.

HIS ANTISLAVERY ACTIVITY.

It is one of the characteristics of the philosophy, of which Follen as the representative of German literature became the interpreter, that it did not resign itself to the mere establishment of abstract systems, but that it strove to carry its message into actual life. This is true especially of the philosophy of Fichte, which placed the greatest emphasis upon the will and the deed. "Alles Höhere," says Fichte,[1] "muss eingreifen wollen auf seine Weise in die unmittelbare Gegenwart und wer wahrhaftig in jenem (Höheren) lebt, lebt zugleich auch in der letzteren." Like Fichte, his teacher and model, Follen believed that the knowledge of the true scholar consists in visions of a spiritual world that does not yet exist, in pictures of a world that is to be realized by man's actions. It is from this point of view that we can understand his active interest in the political affairs of this country, and the motives which impelled him to enter into the antislavery movement.

After landing in this country Follen became at once a keen observer of our national life. Although he was pleased with the general atmosphere of democracy, he gradually became impressed more and more with what he considered a striking contrast between our republican institutions and our habits of thought.[2] On the one hand the American people professed to believe in freedom and independence in spiritual matters, yet the partisan spirit in religion and politics often made public opinion extremely tyrannical; on the other hand, in liberty and equality, yet they held millions of human beings in physical bondage. Like the forty-eighters a quarter of a century later Follen felt that this republic fell short of the political Utopia he had imagined it. With prophetic vision he saw that if America was to realize the high ideals of the

[1] 12th Address to the German Nation, *Sämtliche Werke,* VII,447.

[2] Address on the Cause of Freedom in our Country, *Quarterly Anti-Slavery Magazine,* October, 1836; also *Works,* I, 478; cf. also his letter to Dr. Bowring, *Works,* I, 335ff.

founders of the republic, if it was to become the hope of the world, liberty and equality, both spiritual and physical, would have to become a fact as well as a theory. Despite these inconsistencies, however, he did not lose faith in democratic principles, but dedicated himself anew to the cause of freedom and stood ready to struggle and suffer if necessary in opposing the same principles that had driven him from his native land. The part which he took in the intellectual regeneration of this country has been recounted. The rôle which he played in the movement for the abolition of chattel slavery will be the theme of the following pages.

It is a well-known historical fact that there was a strong current of opposition to the institution of slavery during the colonial period of our history, especially by the Quakers of Pennsylvania;[1] and the Declaration of Independence embodying the political philosophy of the 18th century concerning the natural rights of man gave a still greater impulse to the antislavery sentiment.[2] Impressed by the inconsistency of waging a heroic war for emancipation from despotic foreign rule while holding in bondage a half million slaves, the Revolutionary fathers sought to check the encroachment of a system which made merchandise out of human beings. For a quarter of a century thereafter philanthropic men in the South as well as in the North carried on an antislavery propaganda, organizing societies for improving the condition of the slaves as well as for bringing about their freedom; and during the same period several New England states abolished slavery by constitutional provisions while some of the middle states enacted measures for gradual emancipation.[3]

As early as 1776 it was discovered at the drafting of the Declaration of Independence that the North and South were already at odds over slavery,[4] and this disagreement became still more evident in the Constitional Convention of 1787 as

[1] Goodell, *Slavery and Antislavery*, 35ff.

[2] Ibid., 69ff.

[3] Ibid., 99ff.

[4] See note No. 1 on page 188.

shown by a compromise concerning the representation of the slaves on a two-thirds ratio in the House of Representatives.[2] Not only did the people assume, perhaps correctly, that the Constitution tacitly recognized slavery as a legal institution, but the products of slave labor were beginning to pour such a stream of gold into the coffers of the northern merchants and manufacturers that the question of abolition gradually came to be regarded as a subject too dangerous to be discussed. Owing to the belief also that slavery would gradually be subverted after the prohibition of the foreign slave-trade, the early abolition propaganda subsided to a great extent.[3] For a short time the Missouri controversy of 1820 again aroused serious thought on the subject, but Clay's compromise lulled the people into such a state of acquiescence, and the Colonization project drew their attention from the main issue to such an extent that by the close of another decade neither the pulpit nor the press made more than an occasional allusion to the subject.[4]

In spite of this lethargy of public opinion, however, the antislavery sentiment was kept alive by a number of earnest men both in the free and in the slave states. Among these is to be mentioned especially the New Jersey Quaker, Benjamin Lundy, who as early as 1815 was traveling up and down the country from one state to another speaking against slavery and organizing antislavery societies.[5] Lundy founded also an antislavery paper, "The Genius of Universal Emancipation," which he published successively in several different cities, and finally in Baltimore. In 1828 he was attracted by the antislavery writings of William Lloyd Garrison, then a young man 23 years of age, who was publishing a newspaper in Benning-

[1] von Holst, *Constitutional History of the U. S.*, I, 282.

[2] Hart, *Slavery and Abolition*, 155.

[3] May, *Recollections of the Antislavery Conflict*, 6.

[4] Hart, 165f.

[5] May, 11ff.

ton, Vermont, and in the following year persuaded him to come to Baltimore to assist him in editing the "Genius", "thus putting the burning torch into the hands of the man raised up by Providence to lead the new crusade against the slave power." [1] The first hand knowledge of slavery which Garrison gained in the slave market of Baltimore convinced him that it should be abolished immediately and unconditionally. With this program in view he returned to Boston and on New Years day, 1831, issued the first number of the *Liberator,*—an event which is usually regarded as the beginning of the so-called Garrisonian Abolition propaganda.

Although slavery no longer existed in New England the slave power had thoroughly intrenched itself in commercial affairs, and the proslavery sentiment had become almost universal in political, ecclesiastical, academic, and social circles. Consequently when the *Liberator* appeared with its radical doctrine of immediate abolition an angry protest went up from the South, and the northern business men, yielding to these appeals, decried the antislavery commotion as a dangerous conspiracy. The pulpit and the press also denounced it as unconstitutional and revolutionary, branding Garrison as a fanatic and heaping the grossest insults upon him. Encouraged by its northern sympathizers the South demanded that the *Liberator* should be suppressed by law, and one state went so far as to offer a large reward to any one who would abduct its editor and bring him to trial under the laws of that state.[2] But, to use the words of Follen,[3] "it was then that the voice of one crying in the wilderness, waxing louder and louder in the general indifference, found a response in a few hearts. A small number of men, citizens of Boston, determined to join in the devoted labors and to share the contumely and detestation that fastened upon the disinterested and uncompromising efforts of the obscure printer, who had dared to take upon himself openly the office of a servant of servants."

[1] Johnson, *William Lloyd Garrison and His Times,* 22.

[2] May, 33.

[3] *Christian Examiner,* XXIII, 232.

In January, 1832, this small group of men formed in Boston the first Antislavery Society in New England. From this association the movement spread so rapidly that in response to a demand for a national organization delegates from ten different states founded at Philadelphia in December, 1833, the American Antislavery Society, which maintained in its declaration of principles that all men are created equal; that slavery is a crime against human nature; and that it should be immediately and unconditionally abolished without compensation to the slaveholders.[1]

HIS ESPOUSAL OF THE CAUSE.

In the great slavery conflict various arguments were advanced for and against slavery,—moral, religious, economical, and political, but Follen based his arguments upon strictly philosophical principles, upon Kant's and Fichte's doctrine of man's right to self-determination. He began his antislavery propaganda in this country in his popular lectures on moral philosophy, which he delivered at Boston in 1830. The course of reasoning which he pursued may be briefly stated as follows:[2] Man is a free moral agent created to develop toward infinite perfection. He is entitled by nature to such a mode of existence and action as is conducive to his happiness, to a sphere of freedom in which he can unfold and exercise all his faculties. He has, therefore, the inherent right to property and to freedom from any kind of interference with his will as long as his conduct does not infringe upon the natural rights of others. Follen spoke in no uncertain terms to his Boston audience when he declared that every one who seeks in any way to deprive any individual of his natural rights "is an enemy to society, who should be resisted and if necessary destroyed by the united power of the people." He branded slavery as a huge social conspiracy in which society was using the civil power, designed to be the right hand of justice, "to oppress human beings simply because mother nature had ar-

[1] Goodell, 398.

[2] Expounded especially in his 13th lecture, *Works*, III, 252-270.

rayed them in black and red." In these words he protested against the unjust treatment accorded to the American Indians as well as to the negroes. But why was such injustice tolerated? "Because the slave-holders are in the majority," was his reply; "because some cents less on every pound of cotton will satisfy the sensible and practical people all over the world that slave labor is useful and slavery is right." In these lectures Follen did not enter into the reasons for or against the pretended rights of slavery on the grounds of color, birth, or capture, because he believed there was no room for argument on the subject from the standpoint of moral philosophy. He maintained that long-settled usage may alter the boundaries of property, but that it cannot abolish the difference between man and beast; that is cannot prevail against the rights of human nature. "I allow," he says,[1] "that slave-holders among themselves may settle with the strictest justice the rights of every freeman; but I confess that when I hear the great principles of liberty and equality proclaimed by slave-holders and advocates of slavery I know not whether to rejoice at this meritorious inconsistency, or to mourn to see liberty thus wounded in the house of her friends." So radical a doctrine had seldom been heard in Boston prior to 1830.

Follen's connection with the abolition movement dates from 1831. His widow relates[2] the following incident concerning his first visit to Garrison: One Sunday morning when he was returning from preaching in a neighboring town he overtook a negro on the road, whom he found a very interesting companion. Since it was raining and the man looked rather infirm he invited him to take a seat in the carriage. The man soon began to talk about slavery and told him of Mr. Walker, the author of the incendiary pamphlet, "Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World." He said that Mr. Walker had died suddenly and the colored people thought from appearances that he had been poisoned. This accidental conversation with the poor negro excited Follen's mind so powerfully that

[1] *Works,* III, 265.

[2] Ibid., I, 304.

he soon visited Mr. Garrison, of whose efforts for the slaves he had already heard. According to Mr. May,[1] it was the bugle-blast of the Liberator that summoned him to the conflict. Whatever affected the welfare of mankind was a matter of deep concern to him; therefore he could not be indifferent to a movement which had for its sole object the promotion of human freedom. While most of the clergymen and philanthropists of Boston held themselves aloof from Garrison, Follen often went to the Liberator office, says May, to converse with and encourage the young man who had dared to face the insults and opposition of his fellow citizens in preaching the immediate and unconditional abolition of negro slavery.

Follen did not join the Antislavery Society in the first year of its existence, but he was fully in sympathy with its principles and followed the progress of its propaganda with the liveliest interest. He had already sacrificed country, home, and all that he held dear for the sake of freedom, and it could not be wondered at if even a man of his heroic stamp should have hesitated to take a step which he believed would endanger his worldly interests if not involve him and his family in poverty. He had received repeated warnings [2] that his prospects for advancement would be materially injured unless he adhered strictly to the policy of the College, and had been reminded, too, that as a foreigner it was highly improper for him to meddle with a question whose aim was the subversion of an established American institution. Fearing the loss of southern trade, and honestly believing also that the radical doctrine and severe language of the antislavery agitators would endanger the peace of the country as well as postpone gradual emancipation, the citizens of Boston became embittered against Garrison and his followers; consequently those who identified themselves with the abolition movement did so at the risk of injuring their business interests, of alienating their friends, and of arousing the ill-will of the whole community. Follen however was a man who would not desert the cause of human-

[1] *Antislavery Conflict*, 252.

[2] *Works*, I, 343.

ity for these or any other considerations. He did not hesitate long. In the summer of 1833 appeared Mrs. Child's "Appeal in Favor of that Class of Americans called Africans." This appeal made so deep an impression upon his mind that after solemn consideration of every objection his devout sense of duty would not permit him any longer to stand aloof from a society whose aim was the immediate and unconditional emancipation of over two millions of slaves.

Follen's active participation in the doings of the Antislavery Society began in January, 1834.[1] Upon invitation by the secretary to deliver the main address at the second anniversary of the association he replied as follows:[2] "Your letter is an additional inducement to me to attend the coming anniversary of the New England Antislavery Society. The deep interest I feel in the abolition of slavery throughout the world has made me desirous of becoming more thoroughly acquainted with the plans and the proceedings of your Society, and for this reason I had determined before I received your letter to attend its next general meeting. I feel truly grateful to you and the other gentlemen of the committee for the confidence you have expressed in my sentiments, and for the honor you have conferred upon me by desiring my services on that interesting occasion. But, with the most sincere desire to cooperate with you in this great and holy undertaking, my information on the subject, particularly with regard to the peculiar relations of this country, is still so imperfect, that I do not feel authorized to promise beforehand to make a public

[1] May, 254: "Soon after the New England Antislavery Society was instituted Follen made known his intention to join it. Some friends remonstrated. They admonished him that so doing would be very detrimental to his professional success. He joined the society, became one of its vice-presidents, was an efficient officer and rendered us invaluable service. The apprehensions of his friends proved to be too well founded. The funds for the support of his professorship at Cambridge were withheld, and he was obliged to retire from a position in which he had been exceedingly useful."

In her *Reminiscences of Channing*, 359, Miss Peabody states that although the latter did not feel able to take an active part in the Antislavery Society he was glad to see Follen join it and expressed to him the wish that he would use his influence in its counsels to convince the North of its duty to compensate the slaveholders.

[2] *Works*, I, 341.

address at the first meeting of the Society which I shall attend. I shall take great pleasure in being present as a listener, and a learner, and a warmly sympathizing friend."

The following account of Follen's actual participation in this meeting will show still more conclusively with what peril to himself he joined the Society, and will indicate also in what esteem he was held by such an abolition leader as Whittier. "At the time of the formation of the American Antislavery Society," Whittier writes,[1] "Follen was Professor in Harvard University, honored for his genius, learning, and estimable character. His love of liberty and hatred of oppression led him to seek an interview with Garrison and express his sympathy with him. Soon after, he attended a meeting of the New England Antislavery Society. An able speech was made by Rev. A. A. Phelps, and a letter of mine was read. Whereupon he rose and stated that his views were in unison with those of the society, and that after hearing the speech and the letter he was ready to join it, and abide the probable consequences of such an unpopular act. He lost by so doing his professorship. He was an able member of the Executive Committee of the American Antislavery Society. The few writings left behind him show him to have been a profound thinker of rare spiritual insight."

ADDRESS TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

In May, 1834, the first convention of the New England Antislavery Society was held in Boston. It was a large gathering, and as a member of the committee on arrangements Follen took great interest in making the meeting a success. His activity in the antislavery propaganda had already brought him recognition as one of the leading champions of abolition, and for this reason he was chosen by the convention as chairman of a committee to draft an address to the people of the United States on the subject of slavery.[2] The address[3] which he

[1] *Poetical Works* (Riverside Ed.), IV, 30.

[2] May, 255.

[3] Given in *Works*, V, 189-227.

wrote on this occasion is a lucid exposition of the principles of abolition showing, too, how thoroughly he had studied the slavery question and how deeply concerned he was over the gravity of the whole situation. The general spirit of this appeal to the nation is not unlike that of Fichte's addresses to the German Nation; the same moral fervor, the same deep earnestness, the same breadth of view, and the same prophetic vision. In both cases the situation confronting the nation was somewhat the same. Deeply conscious of the moral decline of his time, the root of which he found in the prevailing egotism, Fichte recognized that an entirely new public spirit had to be created if Germany was to become a strong united nation and fulfill the destiny of the Teutonic race, for the spiritual freedom which it had given to the world could not long exist if the nation itself should succumb to foreign oppression.[1] Follen. too, forsaw the impending crisis which threatened the American nation. To him it was evident [2] that national solidarity was endangered by an immoral and corrupt system that would sooner or later bring the interests of two great sections of the country into direct conflict. He felt also that our republican government could not endure without strict adherence to the principles of the Declaration of Independence, and that the American ideal of human freedom could not be attained without the creation of a new national spirit.

To the Abolitionists the slavery system seemed so contrary to every principle of justice and humanity that they believed the success of their propaganda would be assured if the matter were given an intelligent, impartial hearing by the American public. Despite the degenerating effects of slavery the Abolitionists believed, as Follen pointed out, that the spark of divinity in the slave and the feelings of humanity in the master were not yet extinct, and upon this belief they based their justification of abolition and their hope of its accomplishment. The object of this address was, therefore, to place clearly before the people the evils of slavery as well as to refute some

[1] Cf. Fichte's 1st Address, *Werke,* VII, 264ff.

[2] *Works,* V, 213.

of the more important proslavery arguments; not to convince them of its evils, for that would be as unnecessary, the writer says, as an attempt to prove that liberty is an inestimable good; but to impress upon them the inconsistency and danger of advocating the principles of freedom and equality without at the same time yielding obedience to the universal law of liberty. The address opens with a general exposition of the injustice of slavery from the standpoint of the Declaration of Independence which Follen considered the fundamental law of the land. According to this document which was read with pride throughout the country on every Fourth of July, all government among men derives its just power from the consent of the governed, and is instituted to secure the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, with which all men are endowed equally by their creator. In Follen's opinion these self-evident truths proved the unlawfulness of the government established over the slaves in the same terms in which it justified the self-government of the free.

After this introduction Follen proceeds to portray in clear and convincing arguments the debasing effects of slavery both upon the slaves and upon the slave-holders. In regard to its evil effects upon the nation as a whole he asserted that the system was the cause of all our political dissensions; that it tended to unsettle the groundwork of the government so that every institution founded on the common ground of the Union was like an edifice on volcanic soil, ever liable to have its foundation shaken and the whole structure consumed by subterranean fire.

Among the many proslavery arguments was the contention that immediate emancipation would entail great property loss; that the great majority of slaves were well treated, content, and happy; that they were not prepared for liberty and if suddenly freed would take vengeance upon their masters for their past sufferings. To all these objections to abolition Follen advanced the strongest arguments to show that universal and immediate emancipation would in general prove highly beneficial both to the slave-holders and to the slaves. Granting that the slaves were content with their lot, would this have been a

good reason for continuing the system? Quite the contrary Follen replied, for he believed that if the slave had fallen so low as to rest satisfied with his own degradation and forget that he was a man, then slavery had done its worst and freemen were in duty bound to abolish it.

One of the strongest arguments against the promotion of the abolition propaganda was based upon constitutional grounds. Although the Constitution nowhere speaks of slavery, it was generally interpreted as recognizing the legality of that institution in those states in which it had not been prohibited by the state itself. Everything indicated that slavery was supported by the federal laws, hence the proslavery party maintained that it was improper and dangerous to agitate the question at all. Follen admitted that these objections to the antislavery movement were well grounded, but maintained also that the usual interpretation of Art. IV, Sec. III, 3, of the Constitution was inconsistent with correct principles of legal interpretation. This clause which was supposed to authorize slavery reads as follows: "No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping to another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due." Follen explains [1] that this clause is not inconsistent with the Declaration of Independence if interpreted as referring to such service as may be due from one person to another on any legal grounds except slavery, but that it is inconsistent with the Declaration if interpreted as referring to slave labor and involuntary servitude as well as to free labor and hired service. Admitting for the sake of argument, Follen continues, that the Declaration be acknowledged no longer as valid, and considering the Constitution in the light of a more recent law, which on that account ought to take precedence over the Declaration concerning any point on which these two documents disagree, still it is an established principle of legal interpretation, he explains, that in case of an apparent conflict between two laws the latter should be interpreted strictly; that is, if the words admit

[1] *Works,* V, 208f.

of a wider and narrower interpretation they should be accepted in that sense in which they are least inconsistent with the spirit of the former law. Interpreted in its broader sense the clause in question would recognize slavery as legal; in its narrower sense it would secure the rights of the master to the service of laborers and apprentices only. Since Follen considered it a self-evident truth that service or labor is due only to him who pays for it he maintained that the words "to whom service is due" could not be applicable in the case of slave-labor; therefore he saw no other alternative than either to adopt the stricter interpretation of this clause, or to admit that the fundamental principles of the Declaration, which acknowledges the inalienable rights of man as the only just foundation of government, had been repealed by the Constitution.

Even if the proslavery party admitted the soundness of this interpretation of the Constitution they could still object to its practical application on the grounds that the Constitutional Convention meant to legalize slavery under the broader import of the clause in question. Follen was willing to assume that the framers of the Constitution actually intended to do this very thing, but he believed that they had done it reluctantly. The very fact that they had worded this clause in such a way that it would still be applicable to the service of laborers and apprentices, even if slavery were abolished, made it seem evident to him that they were looking forward to a time when the principles of the Declaration should have removed every sort of government that had not been derived from the consent of the governed. To substantiate this view Follen called attention to the fact that many of the men who framed the Constitution also took part in the early congressional legislation which prohibited slavery and involuntary servitude from the Northwest Territory.[1]

According to Follen's view the Abolitionists did not rest their cause upon the intentions of the Constitutional Conven-

[1] This measure originated with Jefferson, was passed by the Old Congress in 1787, and was ratified by the first Congress under the new Constitution, the entire southern delegation voting for its adoption; cf. Goodell, 83.

tion or upon the interpretation of the Constitution itself, but grounded their hopes of success upon the principle laid down in Washington's farewell address, that the basis of our political system is the right of the people to make and alter their constitutional government. Personally, Follen relied [1] upon the freedom guaranteed by the Constitution to assemble and consult, to speak and to print, and after arousing public sentiment thereby to petition the federal government as well as the state legislatures to abolish slavery by legislative enactments, in other words, by constitution amendments. Thus he advocated [2] that the Abolitionists armed with the weapons furnished by the Constitution itself were in duty bound to continue their propaganda until the principle that man could hold property in man would be effaced from the statute books.

Follen closed his address by urging all American patriots to yield to the new spirit of freedom which was manifest in the popular uprisings of European nations against the divine right of kings. He reminded the people that those nations were awaking to the truth that a man is a man whether European prejudice frowned upon him on account of his station or American prejudice because of his color, and that they would not omit to scrutinize critically the title of a state which used its laws to hold in bondage more than one sixth of its population. He appealed to all true Republicans in whose keeping the destiny of the nation had been committed to prove by their stand on the slavery question whether their liberty was the fruit of determined choice or of a fortunate accident. With prophetic vision he expressed his conviction [3] that unless the slave system were abolished it would sooner or later prove destructive of the Union; that those who were striving directly or indirectly to secure its existence were nourishing the seeds of civil war, and that their efforts to avert it from themselves would only serve to insure its breaking in upon their descendents with increased violence.

[1] *Works,* V, 212.

[2] Ibid., V, 213.

[3] Ibid., V, 217.

This address was perhaps one of the most philosophical and convincing abolition arguments that had up to that time been presented to the American public. It was printed and sent broadcast over the country, to each member of Congress and to some of the most distinguished men of the South. Mrs. Follen states [1] that from the large number of copies sent out only one was returned, with some insulting expressions about foreigners throwing firebrands written in the margins; that although some of the proslavery papers of Boston made insulting remarks about the author, the argument and general spirit of the address were of such a high order that it elicited much praise even from some of the most bitter enemies of the abolition movement. According to Mr. May [2] the people of New England in general knew very little about the Constitution; some of the most intelligent citizens supposed that it expressly guaranteed slavery while many had never read it at all. Shortly after the address was written the Antislavery Society printed a large edition of the Constitution for distribution with Follen's address and other antislavery tracts.[3] It seems reasonable to assume, therefore, that Follen's discussion of the constitutional question of slavery along with a copy of the Constitution itself must have been instrumental in arousing the interest of many people in the abolition movement.

THE MOB YEAR.

The year between the spring of 1835 and that of 1836 was one of the stormiest periods of the early abolition movement, a time that tried the souls of men, and it is often spoken of as the "mob year," the "reign of terror." Although the antislavery cause was growing rapidly it experienced at this time some of its greatest trials and its most bitter proslavery opposition. For a time antislavery meetings were frequently disturbed by mobs, which were sanctioned and even encouraged

[1] Ibid., I, 343.

[2] *Antislavery Conflict,* 141f.

[3] Ibid., 142.

by the pulpit and the press.[1] The notorious outrage of the Boston mob against the Ladies' Antislavery Society, and the dragging of Garrison through the streets with a rope around his body deeply moved the soul of Follen, as his wife writes,[2] winning his heart anew to the persecuted cause. At this time he was a member of the board of managers of the Massachusetts Antislavery Society, attending all its regular business meetings and engaged in organizing auxiliary branches. Samuel May, who as general agent of the Society came into close touch with him during this period, speaks [3] as follows about his fidelity and fearlessness: "He never quailed. His countenance always wore its accustomed expression of calm determination. He aided us by his counsels, animated us by his resolute spirit, and strengthened us by the heart-refreshing tones of his voice."

About this time Miss Martineau, who was studying social conditions in this country, was visiting New England. Distinguished alike for her philanthropic and literary works she was received everywhere with the greatest respect. During her travels the proslavery party sought naturally to impress her in favor of slavery, and in Boston especially she heard many aspersions cast upon the Abolitionists. It chanced during her visit in this city that she met the Follens, and this resulted at once in a mutual admiration and an intimate friendship between them. It seems from Miss Martineau's account [4] that it was Follen who was instrumental in having her visit a meeting of the Ladies' Antislavery Society. She accepted the invitation somewhat reluctantly, as she intimates, in order to learn more about the aims and methods of the Abolitionists, concerning which she as yet knew very little. Although she was antislavery in sentiment her visit to this meeting caused her to identify herself openly with Abolitionists, as is well

[1] Goodell, 404ff.

[2] *Works,* I, 379.

[3] *Antislavery Conflict,* 255.

[4] *Autobiography,* I, 347.

known,[1] and from this time on she wielded her powerful pen in defense of the abolition cause.

In a preceding chapter allusion has been made to Miss Martineau's tour of the west in company with the Follens and several other friends in the spring of 1836. Although they made this journey primarily as a pleasure trip it became a veritable antislavery tour. Everywhere they made abolition propaganda as indicated by Miss Martineau's account [2] as follows: "Wherever we went it was necessary to make up our minds distinctly, and with the full knowledge of each other, what we should say and do in regard to the subject which was filling all men's minds. We resolved, of course, to stand by our antislavery principles, and advocate them wherever fair occasion offered; and we never did omit an opportunity of saying what we knew and thought. On every steamboat and in every stage (when we entered public conveyances) the subject arose naturally; for no subject was so universally discussed throughout the country, though it was interdicted within the walls of the Capitol at Washington. Mr. Loring joined in the conversation when the legal aspects of the matter were discussed; and Dr. Follen when the religious and moral and political bearings of slavery were the subject. Mrs. Follen and Mrs. Loring were full of facts and reasons about the workings of Abolitionism in its headquarters. As for me my topic was Texas. * * * The further we went the more we heard of lynchings which had lately taken place, or were designed for the next Abolitionists who should come that way. In Detroit we heard that our party of Abolitionists were expected, and that everything was in readiness to give us a similar reception. Our Abolitionism could be no secret, ready as we always were to say what we knew and thought."

ADDRESS ON THE RIGHTS OF FOREIGNERS AND WOMEN IN THE ANTISLAVERY MOVEMENT.

The proslavery press was especially bitter in its denunciation of foreigners who "dared to meddle" in the question of

[1] Ibid., I, 351.

[2] Ibid., I, 366.

American slavery, notably in the case of the distinguished English Abolitionist, George Thompson, who was making a lecture tour in this country at this time in the interest of the antislavery movement.[1] Although Follen had lived in this country eleven years and had possessed all the rights of an American citizen for five years he, too, was condemned for his abolition activity both in public and in private as a foreign meddler.[2] Through his address to the American People his active interest in the propaganda made him so well known as an Abolitionist that he was occasionally reminded by the newspapers that a foreigner should remember the protection afforded him by the institutions of this country instead of casting firebrands among the people. To these criticisms Garrison[3] replied in the Liberator: "We wish we had more such foreigners among us." It was this hostile attitude against antislavery agitators of foreign birth, especially the unkind criticism[4] of Miss Martineau after her public avowal of abolition principles that inspired one[5] of Follen's most powerful antislavery addresses. To quote the words of May:[6] "This was his bravest speech. There was not a word, nor a tone, nor a look of compromise in it. He met our opponents at the very points where some of our friends thought us deserving of blame, and he manfully maintained every inch of his ground. It is not easy even for us to recall, and it is impossible to give to those who were not Abolitionists then, a clear idea of the state of the community at the time that speech was made."

This address is couched in the form of a resolution and opens thus: "Resolved that we consider the Antislavery Cause as the cause of philanthropy, with regard to which all human

[1] May, 125.

[2] *Works,* I, 342.

[3] Cf. *Story of his Life by his Children,* I, 441f.

[4] Cf. *Autobiography,* I, 352; *Works,* I, 380f.

[5] Made in the annual meeting of the Massachusetts Antislavery Society at Boston, January, 1836. Extant only in part, *Works,* I, 637ff.

[6] *Antislavery Conflict,* 255.

beings,—white men and colored men, citizens and foreigners, men and women, have the same duties and the same rights."

Follen began with the statement that the whole abolition creed could be summed up in the single proposition that the slave is a man created in the image of God and is therefore a freeman by divine right. The very fact that the slave is a human being, is Follen's argument, makes it incumbent upon everyone of whatever color, nationality, or sex, by virtue of a common nature, to become his rightful and responsible defender. Follen admitted that in personal and domestic relation each individual may choose his company according to his likes or dislikes. He insisted, however, that the colored people should be admitted into all public meetings and societies designed for the establishment of human rights, for he was consistent enough not to demand that the white slaveholder of the South live on terms of civil equality with colored slaves unless the white Abolitionists of the North would do the same.

In the second part of his address Follen speaks in defense of the foreign-born agitators. Since the antislavery movement was not a national but a philanthropic cause he contended that no distinction should be made between foreigners and natives. If millions of human beings were driven out daily to hard toil and degraded without redress, and millions of free citizens neglected in their prosperity to aid their unfortunate fellow-men, suppose some foreigner chanced to come along and sought to heal the wounds of the downtrodden,—who, Follen asked, would be a neighbor to them who were wounded in body and soul? "Shall we," he exclaimed reprovingly, "on beholding such signal kindness, cry out with the Jews of old,—He is a Samaritan and has a devil!—or with our modern national bigots,—He is a foreigner, an English emissary, mob him, tar and feather him!" Follen felt that those foreigners who supported the abolition cause were America's best friends and that their very participation in it was the surest pledge of their confidence in American love of truth and sense of justice. He was firmly convinced also that any attempt to prevent either citizens or foreigners from expressing fully their opinion on such a great moral question was far worse in this country than

in any other, simply because we had pledged our lives and fortunes and sacred honor to uphold the equal rights of all.

The last topic of the address is a defense of the rights of women. It has already been pointed out in the preceeding chapter how Follen took the advance ground on this question. —how in his plan of religious reform he desired to place women upon an equality with men and to give them equal opportunity to speak in public services. According to the custom of those times few women except among the Quakers took part in public meetings, but the abolition movement marked the dawn of a new era in this respect. At the very beginning of the movement several earnest and talented women devoted themselves to the cause, making suggestions, giving advice, employing their pens, and through the encouragement and support of such men as Garrison and Whittier gradually began to take part in public discussions. Follen, too, was an ardent advocate of equal rights, and the argument which he made in this address must have had an inspiring effect upon the women, especially so since it was a rare thing at that time to hear a public defense of their cause in conservative New England. One of the most significant portions of this address runs as follows:

"I maintain that with regard to the antislavery cause men and women have the same duties and rights. The ground I take on this point is very plain. I wish to spare you, I wish to spare myself, the worthless and disgusting task of replying in detail to all the coarse attacks and flattering sophisms by which men have endeavored to entice or to drive women from this and from many other spheres of moral action. 'Go home and spin!' is the well-meaning advice of the domestic tyrant of the old school. 'Conquer by personal charms and fashionable attractions!' is the brilliant career marked out for her by the idols and the idolators of fashion. 'Never step out of the bounds of decorum and the customary ways of doing good!' is the sage advice of maternal caution. 'Rule by obedience, by submission sway!' is the golden saying of the moralist poet, sanctioning female servitude, and pointing out a resort and compensation in female cunning. With the fear of insolent

remarks and of being thought unfeminine, it is indeed proof of uncommon moral courage or of an overpowering sense of religious duty and sympathy for the oppressed that a woman is induced to embrace the unpopular, unfashionable, obnoxious principles of the Abolitionists. Popular opinion, the habit of society, are all calculated to lead women to consider the place, the privileges, and the duties which etiquette has assigned to them as their peculiar portion, as more important than those which nature has given to them in common with men. Men have at all times been inclined to allow to women peculiar privileges, while withholding from them essential rights. In the program of civilization and Christianity one right after another has been conceded, one occupation after another has been placed within the reach of women. Still we are far from a practical acknowledgement of the simple truth, that the rational and moral nature of man is the foundation of all rights and duties and that women as well as men are rational and moral beings. Women begin to feel that the place men have marked out for them is but a small part of what society owes to them, and which they themselves owe to society."

To what extent Follen's address was instrumental in stimulating an interest in women's rights cannot of course be determined. At any rate it must have made a deep impression. Mr. May observes [1] that Whittier, who was present, was so deeply affected by its fervor and logic that he composed that very night his famous "Stanzas for the Times," [2] one of his best antislavery poems.

DEFENSE OF FREE SPEECH.

The Abolitionists reached the culmination of their trials in the spring of 1836. Not only did the mobs attempt to suppress the antislavery movement, but the proslavery leaders, claiming that all antislavery newspapers were designed to incite the slave to insurrection and murder, sought to gag the press through statutory enactments. As early as 1832 Judge

[1] *Antislavery Conflict,* 265.

[2] *Poetical Works* (Riverside Ed.), III, 35.

Thatcher[1] of Boston, in a charge to the Grand Jury, pronounced it a misdemeanor indictable at common law to publish in one state with intent to send into another any such publications, and in 1835 the Hon. Wm. Sullivan wrote a pamphlet expressing the same sentiment as follows: "It is to be hoped and expected," he said,[2] "that Massachusetts will enact laws declaring the printing, publishing, and circulating of papers and pamphlets on slavery, and also the holding of meetings to discuss slavery and abolition, to be public indictable offenses, and provide for the punishment thereof in such manner as will more effectually prevent such offenses." Such sentiment in the North naturally encouraged the South to demand legislation upon the subject. Accordingly the Governor of South Carolina declared in a message[3] to the legislature in December 1835 that the corner-stone of the republican edifice rests upon slavery, and demanded that the laws of every community should punish with death without benefit of the clergy all those who interfered with the institution. The legislatures of several southern states passed resolutions[4] requesting the non-slaveholding states of the union to suppress all abolition societies, and to make it highly penal to print, publish, and distribute newspapers, pamphlets, tracts and pictorial representations calculated or having a tendency to excite the slaves of the southern states to insurrection and revolt.

In consequence of these demands, which were officially communicated to the governors of the non-slaveholding states, Governor Edward Everett in his message to the legislature of Massachusetts in January 1836, alluded particularly to the subject of slavery, admonishing all classes to abstain from discussing the subject, censuring the Abolitionists, and intimating that they were guilty of offenses punishable at common law. This portion[5] of the message was referred to a joint

[1] Johnson, *Garrison and his Times,* 212f.

[2] Ibid.; also Goodell, 409.

[3] Goodell, 413.

[4] Original resolutions quoted by Goodell, 413f.; cf. also May, 185ff.

[5] Quoted by Goodell, 415.

legislative committee of five members for consideration. Believing that any unfavorable action by this commission would jeopardize the abolition cause and endanger also the liberties of the people in general, the Massachusetts Anti-slavery Society petitioned the committee to grant them a hearing in order to present reasons why the legislature should not take action condemning the Abolitionists. Upon permission to present their claims the Society sent a delegation to the legislature where, on the 4th of March, it entered into one of the most memorable and heroic struggles in the history of the early abolition movement. Follen was among the nine representatives chosen to avert the danger that seemed impending over the Abolitionists, and in this struggle he disinguished himself as one of the most powerful defenders of the freedom of speech and of the press.

The scene in the legislature just preceding the hearing is described as follows[1] by Miss Martineau, who was present on that occasion: "While the committee were, with ostentatious negligence, keeping the Abolitionists waiting, the Senate Chamber presented an interesting spectable. The contemptuous committee, dawdling about some immaterial business, were lolling over a table, one twirling a pen, another squirting tobacco juice, and another giggling. The Abolitionists, to whom this business was a prelude to life or death, were earnestly consulting in groups,—at the further end of the chamber Garrison and another; somewhat nearer, Dr. Follen, looking German all over, and a deeper earnestness than usual overspreading his serene and meditative countenance; and in consultation with him Mr. Loring. There was May, and Goodell, and Sewall, and several others, and many an anxious face looking down from the gallery. During the suspense the door opened and Dr. Channing entered—one of the last people who could on that winter afternoon have been expected."

Concerning the proceedings that then took place Garrison[2]

[1] The Martyr Age of America, *Westminster Review*, December, 1838.

[2] *Story of his Life by his Children*, II, 95ff.

gives the following account: "Mr. May began the defense and spoke pretty well for nearly an hour, but was frequently interrupted by the members of the committee, who, with one exception, behaved in an insolent and arbitrary manner. Mr. Loring then spoke about fifteen minutes in a very admirable manner. Mr. Goodell then followed at some length, very ably, but was cramped by the committee. I succeeded him pretty warmly, but without interruption. Professor Follen began next with great boldness and eloquence. His share was to show the relation of cause and effect between Faneuil Hall meeting and the mob of October 21 as foreshadowing the result of legislative resolutions censuring the Abolitionists."

Follen began his argument [1] with a series of philosophical remarks upon the rights of man and upon the spirit and purpose of our republican institutions, maintaining that liberty of speech and of the press was essential to the preservation of the government. He declared boldly at the outset that whatever would not bear to be examined and criticized must be essentially bad and ought not to be perpetuated, and that any attempt to stifle the voice or muzzle the press was a sure indication of an attempt to perpetuate what ought to be abolished. He pointed out that the Abolitionists wished to overthrow slavery only by exercising their constitutional right to speak and print their opinions of it, whereas the proslavery party was bent on preventing this, not by proving that slavery was not an evil, but by denying the right to express any opinion whatsoever about it. After alluding to the attempts to excite odium against the Abolitionists, and to the demands of southern legislatures for the suppression of their doctrines by penal laws, he referred also to the Faneuil Hall meeting [2] and its censure of the Abolitionists. Believing that this meeting had instigated the Boston mobs Follen argued that legislative censure of the Abolitionists would have similar consequences. "Would not the mobocrats," he asked, "again undertake to

[1] *Works*, I, 389ff.

[2] Held by the proslavery party in August, 1835, to oppose the Abolutionists; cf. May, 151.

execute the informal sentence of the general court?" Hereupon the chairman of the committee cried out: "Stop Sir, you may not pursue this course of remark, it is insulting to this committee and to the legislature which they represent."[1] After protesting that he had not even intimated that the committee or the legislature would approve an act of violence, and being refused a second permission to proceed with his defense, Follen took his seat. After a vigorous protest by the members of the delegation he was allowed to take the floor again. With calm dignity he arose a second time and asked to be distinctly informed what he had said that could be construed as disrespectful to the committee, and whether the right to speak was to be recognized only as a special favor. The chairman would make no satisfactory reply to these questions, whereupon Follen again took his seat and the meeting came to an abrupt close.

The Abolitionists sent a remonstrance to the legislature on the following day. This was referred to the same committee, and a second hearing was granted on the 8th. According to Mr. May[2] it was intended that Follen should address the committee first, beginning just where he had been interrupted by Mr. Lunt, and that he should press home that part of the argument which was deemed so important. When he again confronted the committee he opened with the statement that the only point at issue was the principle of the freedom of speech, maintaining that the Abolitionists were accused of crime not for anything they had done, but for what they had believed and said, and that the governor had endorsed the accusation simply because they had exercised in the cause of humanity a right which was guaranteed by the laws of the state and of the federal government. He called attention to the fact that Jefferson himself had prophesied long before that slavery must come to an end in America, and that the European countries had already begun to free their slaves. Since the spirit of the times demanded emancipation, and since it was only a ques-

[1] May, 194.

[2] *Antislavery Conflict,* 195.

tion, as he believed, whether it was to come by peaceful discussion or by the arbitrament of war, it was highly important, he maintained, to meet the issue face to face instead of demanding silence on the subject. He admitted that the Abolitionists had in some cases been intemperate in their speech, but asserted that the right of free expression of their opinions could not for that reason be denied. The all-important question was, therefore, not whether the legislature would crush the abolition propaganda, but whether it would suppress free speech forever. Follen expressed his belief that the action of the mobs was due to misrepresentations of the Abolitionists, and that it was honestly intended to preserve the Union, but he contended that penal enactments against the Abolitionists would be less dangerous to them than condemnatory resolutions which would be left to Judge Lynch for enforcement. At this point he was again called to order on the ground of using language disrespectful to the committee. To this he replied that he could not understand how such an allusion could be interpreted as disrespectful to the committee or to the legislature, but the chairman retorted that it was improper and would not be permitted. After a long parley he was permitted to proceed and had the satisfaction of expressing his views without further opposition. He pointed out clearly and forcibly that legislative censure would tend directly and indirectly to excite mobs, explained the dangerous consequences of mob rule to all classes, and insisted that the legislature could not justly censure citizens in the exercise of a legal right.

Inch by inch Follen fought his way, battling for freedom of speech in a free land. In his contention for principle and his resistance of wrong he manifested the same invincible spirit that had animated him in his European struggle for freedom.[1] Concerning his conduct on this occasion Mr. May speaks thus:[2] "A committee of the Massachusetts legislature might not be so august a presence as the Holy Alliance, but in

[1] By the proslavery press Follen was bitterly assailed for the part he took in this legislative hearing. Cf. *Works,* I, 403.

[2] Eulogy on Follen before the Antislavery Society of Boston in April, 1840. Quoted in part, *Works,* I, 402.

Follen's regard the occasion that called him to the Hall of Representatives was as much more momentous than the occasion on which he resisted the Allied Sovereigns at Basel as the infringement of the liberties of speech by a democratic government would be more disastrous to the cause of freedom than any encroachment on human rights by absolute monarchs. We were all impressed by his intent look, his earnest, solemn manner. And we can never cease to be grateful to him for his pertinacity in maintaining his own rights against the aggressive overbearance of the chairman of that committee." "I have sometimes thought it was the turning point in the affairs of our old Commonwealth." [1]

THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM IN OUR COUNTRY.

Under the above caption Follen addressed another powerful appeal to the people of the United States. In this discourse [2] he strikes at the very root of the whole trouble, directing his remarks not so much against the institution of slavery itself, but against what he considered the general spirit[3] of intolerance and oppression, which he believed was undermining the very foundations of our national life,—a spirit of which negro slavery was only the grosser manifestation. In spite of delusive appearance, of the deceptive calm on the surface of society, he saw with the eye of a critical observer in all the different phases of American life, in all the flunctuations of public opinion, two antagonistic principles,—liberty and oppression. By liberty he meant, of course, the natural rights to those things which best subserve the progress and happiness of mankind; and by oppression any infringement on those rights, whether imposed upon one or all, by the cunning of a few or by the violence of the many.

He directed public attention especially to what he considered a tendency to oppression not only in the manners and

[1] *Antislavery Conflict*, 256.

[2] Published in *Quarterly Antislavery Magazine*, October, 1836.

[3] In a letter to Follen, May 9, 1837, Channing expresses this same idea; cf. *Channing's Life*, 546.

habits of the people, but also in the state and national laws themselves. Although the Declaration of Independence had recognized the inalienable rights of man as the infallible test of the validity of every law, the accepted interpretation of the Constitution supported, to use his own words, "an aristocracy of absolute monarchs." These illiberal principles and anti-republican tendencies were increasing, as he pointed out, were influencing public opinion, and in some cases beginning to modify American institutions and modes of life. Slavery was not only a local evil in the South, but its moral effect upon the nonslaveholding states caused thousands of colored freemen to be excluded from institutions of learning, from the refining influence of good society, from profitable employment, and even from the exercise of political rights. Not only had these illiberal principles affected the African, but had made the Indian, too, one of the greatest victims of oppression.

Turning from these more prominent defects in our social system in general, Follen next discussed the symptoms of this same spirit of oppression, which he had observed in both our public and private life. He called these symptoms "in part superannuated remnants of European feudal institutions, in part the indication of new-grown propensities to return to the same creations of political idolatry." Among the remains of feudalism which still existed in republican America of the 19th century Follen mentions imprisonment for debt, which was still allowed by the laws of some states; and the binding out of children as apprentices for a much longer and severer servitude, he asserts, than the laws even of monarchical Europe permitted. As to the question of women's rights he speaks again as follows: "Women, although fully possessed of that rational and moral nature which is the foundation of all rights, enjoy amongst us fewer legal rights than under the civil law of continental Europe. Chivalrous courtesy is a poor substitute for rights withheld. The deference so generally paid to women often bears the character of condescending flattery rather than respect grounded on a sincere recognition of equality."

Another weakness of our national life that Follen pointed out was the passion for aristocratic distinction, the great

regard which certain Americans had for foreign titles of nobility, their intemperate craving after office, and their eager pursuit of wealth in order to keep up a certain high style of living and to move in a certain social set. Follen found this same spirit present in religion and politics, dividing society into classes, cliques and clans, and suppressing individual feeling and opinion. In academic life he observed in many cases a certain subserviency to wealth, an artificial system of emulation among students, and arbitrary discipline,—defects which he considered incompatible with the ideals of a republican nation. To him this illiberal tendency seemed to be confined to no particular individuals or classes; the friends of freedom in one sphere often acting the part of oppressors in another. This spirit gave rise especially to industrial tyranny, as Follen observed; in attempts to prevent the association of laboring men for their mutual benefit, in the attempts of these same labor organizations to force individuals to comply with their resolutions, and in the monopolies of privileged corporations. But the worst of all was, as he maintained, the attempt to make property instead of men the basis of political representation, to prevent universal suffrage, and to throw obstacles in the way of universal education.

It was this universal spirit of tyranny which was sapping the life of the nation, that aroused Follen to send forth his warning of danger—a warning which in its pertinency is applicable even at the present time. He believed that safety lay only in strict adherence to the principle "that in a republic as a collective, moral, free agent, all should govern and obey themselves;" that is, in universal suffrage.

USE OF THE PULPIT IN THE MOVEMENT.

Such writers as May, Johnson, and Birney are unanimous in declaring that the churches were the bulwark of slavery and that the clergy was on the whole hostile to abolition. While on the other hand it is conceded [1] that later Unitarianism was

[1] Cf. Frothingham, *Trancendentalism in New England,* Preface; Merriam, *American Political Theories,* 216ff.; Birney, 281ff.

closely related to the abolition propaganda, it is not known generally that Follen was one of the first Unitarian preachers who used the pulpit as a direct means of proclaiming antislavery principles. Soon after entering the ministry he was taken to task by one of his friends in the following words:[1] "Your sermons are very sensible, but you spoil your discourses with your views about freedom. We are all weary of hearing the same thing from you. You always have something about freedom in whatever you have to say to us. I am sick of hearing about freedom; we have too much freedom." His wife states[2] that he never introduced the subject of immediate abolition directly in the pulpit except once, but that he always preached against slavery. All his sermons were expressions in some form or another of his faith in the divinity of human nature, and on the question of slavery he stated his views simply and fully, actuated only by an unswerving devotion to what he believed was true. It was not merely his pity for the negro slave that made him an antislavery preacher, but rather his great respect for the rights of men as such. He was often sharply rebuked by his parishioners,[3] but to all criticisms of his views on slavery he replied with merely a pleasant smile and a kindly word and preached on, discussing the question with full consciousness of the social sacrifice it involved.

When Follen was invited to preach on Unitarianism in Washington, the stronghold of slavery, he was requested not to introduce his slavery views into his discourses. As a guest he had, of course, to accede to the wishes of the people, but his Unitarian sermons were at the same time antislavery sermons without the mention of slavery. Concerning this incident Follen wrote to Channing as follows:[4] "I am obliged to be silent on Abolition but I preach with all my might on the dignity and rights of human nature, on the great texts, 'Honor all men,' and 'All ye are brethren,' and pray for the oppressed.

[1] *Works,* I, 250.

[2] Ibid., I, 486.

[3] Ibid., I, 463f.

[4] Ibid., I, 443.

There is now and then, apparently, an expectation of hearing rank abolition doctrine, but I avoid exciting words and let the principles make the desired impression. I have never been so strongly impressed with the intrinsic antislavery tendency of Unitarianism, as taking its stand on the absolute worth and eternal destiny of human nature."

When he became pastor of the First Unitarian Church in New York he was careful at the very outset to acquaint his congregation with his attitude upon the slavery question. In his first sermon to them he spoke of the duties of the clergy to all efforts of philanthropy, mentioning among them the duty of the Christian minister toward the Society for the Abolition of Slavery. In a later sermon [1] he gave direct expression to his views on slavery. He told his congregation plainly that the spirit of civil liberty which had prompted the founders of the republic to throw off the hereditary traditions of the old world and to found a new nation based upon the principles of freedom and equality should induce their descendents to sympathize with the antislavery cause, to employ all lawful and moral means and to make any sacrifice for removing from our soil the curse of slavery. He admonished his hearers to study the subject thoroughly and impartially, to read both sides and then with determined purpose to follow the course which conscience dictated. He maintained that the subject had to be discussed, that free discussion was the only way to settle the question satisfactorily, and that it was the duty of every citizen under all circumstances to uphold the supremacy of the law against the attempts of mobs to suppress the freedom of speech.

Doctrines such as Follen here and in his antislavery speeches promulgated are taken by us today as a matter of course, but to the masses of New York and New England three quarters of a century ago they sounded like the utterances of an anarchist. The effect which the sermon just mentioned made upon the fashionable circles of New York is described by Follen in a letter [2] to Miss Martineau, as follows:

[1] Ibid., II, Sermon 16.

[2] Ibid., I, 435.

"The impression made by this small part of my sermon was very strong; and two influential men, one who belongs to my society and another who belongs to Mr. Dewey's, left the meeting-house in great anger while I was preaching. I have been blamed by many for introducing this subject, though they all agree that what I said was true, and that old custom allowed the preacher on Thanksgiving day to preach on politics. It is somewhat doubtful now whether they will keep me here permanently, though they declare themselves satisfied in other respects. I feel sure that if I had known the consequences I should have changed nothing in manner or matter. A few strongly approved of the part I had taken, but the majority are either angry or afraid or sorry." The matter turned out as Follen suspected it would. At the close of the period for which he had been engaged on trial so much opposition [1] to his reappointment was manifested that he withdrew his name as a candidate for the permanent pastorate of the church.

Dr. Channing is usually accorded the highest honor among those Unitarian clergymen who took their stand on the slavery question. From his early life he was deeply impressed with the evils of slavery. By preaching eloquently against it and by contributing to antislavery literature he rendered most important service in creating antislavery sentiment, but while recognizing the justice of immediate abolition he never identified himself with the Abolitionists. To Follen he wrote in July 1834 as follows:[2] "So great a question as slavery cannot be viewed by all from one position, nor with entire agreement as to the modes of treating it; and the cause will be aided by the existence of a body who have much sympathy with people at large as to the difficulties of emancipation, but who uncompromisingly maintain that the abolition of slavery ought immediately to be decided on, and means used for immediately commencing this work. I feel no freedom, as some sects say, to join any of your bodies, but the cause is dear to my heart." In his letter to Birney in 1836 he criticized the Abolitionists for their intemperate language and radical doctrines. To these

[1] Ibid., I, 478.

[2] *Channing's Works,* 530.

criticisms Follen sent him subsequently the following friendly rebuke:[1] "I could wish that your censure of the Abolitionists had been as clearly defined as your generous expression of what you approve in their conduct. More distinct and pointed censure would have benefitted them and have deprived the enemies of their cause of a means of arming themselves with quotations which, taken by themselves, imply a more general condemnation than they actually contain when held together by other parts of the letter."

According to Chadwick[2] it was through Follen's influence that Channing made his nearest approach to the Abolitionists. On this point Garrison himself speaks thus:[3] "I was no favorite of Dr. Channing at any time. He never gave me a word of counsel or encouragement. He never invited me to see him that he might understand from my own lips my real feelings and purposes, and afford me the benefit of his experience and advice. My early faithful and clear-sighted friend, Professor Follen, tried to induce him to make my acquaintance, believing it would be mutually serviceable, but he never manifested any desire to do so."

Although Follen did not agree with Garrison on many questions, the latter counted him as one of his staunchest supporters and held him in such loving esteem that he named his own son, "Charles Follen." "The child had a certain facial resemblance to Dr. Follen," says the biographer of Garrison,[4] "and in his father's own words when the boy died in 1849, 'gave promise of future usefulness and excellence in some degree commensurate with the worth and fame of the truly great and good man after whom he was named admiringly, gratefully, reverently.' "

[1] *Works,* I, 438.

[2] *William Ellery Channing,* 382.

[3] *Liberator,* 23 (1854); *Story of his Life,* III, 242.

[4] *Story of his Life,* III, 242.

POLITICAL ATTITUDE ON SLAVERY.

As the abolition movement progressed the radical Garrisonians, it will be remembered,[1] gradually diverged from the main body of the Abolitionists and identified themselves with other social movements, denouncing the Constitution and advocating non-resistance, non-coercion, and the no-government theory in politics. Follen, however, can hardly be classed with this extreme left wing. According to Mrs. Follen's account,[2] he did not agree with Garrison on some questions apart from the antislavery propaganda, and was often displeased with his intemperate language and bitter attacks upon individuals, but he loved and honored him and aided him in every way possible, believing that his virtues far outweighed his faults and that his harsh utterances were prompted by the same spirit that moved the prophets of old. Follen himself never indulged in personal vituperation on the slavery question; as Rev. Simmons testifies,[3] "his zeal in Antislavery never betrayed him into ascerbity and intolerance, for he was not a bigot in any department of thought or action." Like Garrison he was a staunch advocate of abolition, but unlike him he was, according to Miss Peabody's statement,[4] "an uncompromising compensationist." As to immediate abolition he believed [5] that the state of ignorance obtaining among the slaves might, indeed, render it inexpedient to give them the immediate and unlimited exercise of every privilege, but maintained it was a duty to give them the immediate enjoyment of all those rights for which they were qualified together with the means to fit themselves as soon as possible for the exercise of every privilege enjoyed by the white freemen.

It was the main function and the chief service of the early Abolitionists, such as Garrison, May, Whittier, and Fol-

[1] Birney, 314ff.; Goodell, 457ff.; Woodburn, 56ff.

[2] *Works,* I, 379f.

[3] Cf. *Sprague's Annals,* VIII, 544.

[4] Ibid., VIII, 547.

[5] Cf. Address to the American People, *Works,* V, 198.

len to arouse the national conscience,—to lay the foundation upon which was to rise a political party to oppose the spread of slavery. About 1834 Garrison advocated a "Christian party in politics," with particular reference, it is said,[1] to the slave question, but soon abandoned this for his no-government hobby. Follen, on the other hand, was desirous of carrying the propaganda into the political arena. This is plainly evident from his article on The Cause of Freedom in our Country. "When we see the anti-republicans," he says,[2] "in every walk of life and line of business endeavoring to strengthen their natural connection by active alliance and cooperation, it is high time that the republicans of every description, the friends of universal freedom in speaking, printing, trading, manufacturing, voting, and worshipping, should recognize each other as fellow-laborers and learn consistency from their common enemy."

In the last paragraph of this article he expressly advocates the founding of a new progressive democratic party organized upon the fundamental principles of abolition. He expresses himself on the subject as follows:[3] "It becomes those who have not lost all sense of the dignity of human nature to declare that they consider the personal rights of man as the foundation of every other; and that they cannot recognize any property which is inconsistent with that which every human being holds in his own soul and body. If there is ever to be in this country a party that shall take its character and name not from particular liberal measures, or popular men, but from its uncompromising and consistent adherence to Freedom, it must direct its first decided effort against the grossest form, the most complete manifestation of oppression; and having taken antislavery ground, it must carry out the principle of liberty in all its consequences. It must support every measure conductive to the greatest possible individual, social, moral, intellectual, religious, and political freedom,

[1] Goodell, 469; Birney, 289, 309.

[2] *Quarterly Antislavery Magazine,* October, 1836, p. 65; cf. also Goodell, 469.

[3] Ibid., p. 72f.

whether that measure be brought forward by inconsistent slave-holders or by consistent freemen. It must embrace the whole sphere of human action, watching and opposing the slightest illiberal, anti-republican tendency; and concentrating its whole force and influence against slavery itself, in comparison with which every other species of tyranny is tolerable, by which every other is strengthened and justified."

Follen made his last contribution [1] to antislavery literature in the autumn of 1838. In July of that year the Christian Examiner contained two articles [2] in which the Abolitionists were accused of being wrong and unwise in their measures, and of having discussed the subject of slavery in a manner decidedly at variance with constitutional liberty of speech and of the press. Since Follen's name was on the list of contributors to the Examiner he was given permission [3] by the editors to send in an article in vindication of these charges on condition that it should contain no pointed answer to anything the Examiner had published against abolition. In his vindication Follen gave a complete resumé of abolition principles, emphasizing that political means were to be employed for the prohibition of slavery in all federal domains, but disclaiming any purpose on the part of the Abolitionists to interfere with the so-called state rights.

Concerning the political phase of abolition Follen expresses his views again in a letter[4] written about this time to Miss Martineau, as follows: "We Abolitionists have changed our political course. We are satisfied that abolition in the District of Columbia and prohibition of the internal trade are more important than all other political controversies of the day. So each is ready to waive his democratic or whig propensities in favor of the candidate who will vote for these two

[1] Antislavery Principles and Proceedings, published in the *Christian Examiner,* XXIII (November, 1838).

[2] Review of Dr. Wayland's Limitation of Responsibility, and of Miss Martineau's Retrospect of Western Travel.

[3] *Works,* I, 493.

[4] *Works,* I, 489f.

measures. This course, considering the nearly equal strength of the two parties, will give us a practical influence for freedom, which no attempt at forming a new party of our own would procure us. Think of the disgrace of the democratic members in the last Congress before the adjournment, agreeing upon a declaration of sentiments in which antislavery is denounced for the purpose of conciliating the South."

It was this attitude of subserviency on the part of the two great parties to the interests of the slave power that led the one wing of the political Abolitionists to discard the plan of holding a balance of power and to found an independent political party in 1840.[1] In view of the fact that Follen was a staunch advocate of such a party somewhat earlier, it is very probable that he would have affiliated with this new Liberty Party had he lived until its organization.

* * * * * *

Follen's untimely death caused great sorrow in the ranks of the Abolitionists; they felt, as Mr. May expresses it, that "one of our towers of strength had fallen." Follen lost his life in January, 1840, and in February following, the Antislavery Society made arrangements to hold a great public memorial service in which Mr. May was to make the main eulogy. So strong was the feeling against the Society that all the churches of Boston were refused for this meeting.[2] Channing indeed offered his church, but the trustees would not give their consent.[3] Even Follen's own church[4] at East Lexington which had been built under his direction, and to the

[1] Goodell, 468ff.; Birney, 332ff.

[2] Cf. *Antislavery Conflict,* 258f. According to Chadwick's *Life of Channing,* 294, Wendell Phillips denounced this incident as the lowest depths of Boston's subserviency to the slaveholding interests.

[3] Channing was greatly grieved by this insult to the memory of his friend; cf. *Channing's Life,* 571; Chadwick, 412, says also that the fact that Channing preached only a few more times in the Federal Street Church may be taken as a sign of his instinctive withdrawal from a ministry to which such an incident was possible.

[4] The church is now called the Follen Church and a tablet in memory of Follen has recently been placed on its walls.

dedicatory exercises of which he was on his way when he met his horrible death, was refused. Not until April 27th was there a church unbarred, when Rev. Walker offered the use of Marlborough Chapel in which to hold the eulogy and other appropriate exercises commemorative of Follen's service to the cause of liberty both in Europe and in America. His struggle for political freedom and German unity had ended in exile. His moral courage, his boldness, and fearlessness in daring to lift up his voice in behalf of the enslaved had destroyed his prospects also in this country.[1] The consequent poverty and loss of friends made him a second time a martyr to the cause of freedom.

In regard to the part which the German-Americans took in the abolition of American slavery Follen was a pioneer paving the way for those who came later, especially the Forty-eighters, who played so important a rôle in the organization of the Republican party and in fighting the battles of the civil war. Had Karl Follen lived to continue his efforts and to take part in the great final conflict his name would without doubt stand high [2] in the list of those heroic spirits through whose labors and sacrifice the stain of slavery was blotted out of our national life.

[1] It is said that his prospects for promotion in the University and in the Unitarian Church were destroyed by his devotion to antislavery. Cf. May, *Antislavery Conflict,* 256f.; Whittier, *Poetical Works,* IV, 30; Carlos Martyn's work on Wendell Phillips, 108; Lindsay Swift's work on Garrison, 119, 144; J. J. Chapman's work on Garrison, 28.

[2] The service alone which he rendered the cause in his defense of free speech was great enough in the opinion of W. H. Channing to rank him among our national heroes and sages. Cf. *Christian Examiner,* XXXIII, 54.

CONCLUSION.

Follen exerted his greatest influence not so much by his writings as by his deeds. In summing up his various activities one is impressed by the fact that they emanated from a personality endowed with a moral will-power of extraordinary force. It is the manifestation of this will-power which gives his tragic career the character of an organic unity. The term "Der Unbedingte" under which he was known in his youth characterized him to the end of his life. Whatever he recognized as just and true he pursued with unyielding perseverence regardless of the results. There was an element of heroism in his character.

To his moral strength was joined also great intellectual power. He was eminent not only in the field of benevolent action, but also in the realm of abstract thought. He had a profound knowledge of history and law, but his inclinations were chiefly to philosophical subjects, especially to questions concerning the nature and destiny of the human mind. With Kant he considered life a state in which man, as a free moral agent and faithful to duty, is to determine himself, is to advance amid trials and temptations toward a more perfect existence. In the discussion of such exalted themes his thoughts, often original, were arrayed in language beautified by his lively immagination and deep feeling.[1] His intellect and heart reacted upon each other. To use the words of Miss Peabody,[2] "his mind could comprehend any depths of principle, but he did not carry his brain in his head so much as in his heart." This beautiful harmony of his nature explains the secret of his remarkable influence.

It was Follen's idealism that made him a political and religious reformer. Imbued with the teachings of the idealistic philosophers and poets of Germany, he was filled with righteous indignation at the arrogant despotism of the German rulers of his time. For him to think and be convinced was to

[1] Cf. Miss Martineau, *Society in America,* III, 76: "The great mass of his knowledge is vivified by a spirit which seems to have passed through all human experiences."

[2] Cf. *Sprague's Annals,* VIII, 547.

act; consequently he entered the struggle against absolute monarchism regardless of the cost to himself, espousing the cause of liberty with a moral heroism which could not be daunted by the threats of tyrants. In his attempt to overthrow despotism he was actuated only by the purest and noblest motives, by his sense of justice, his ardent patriotism, and his love of liberty. On account of his unfaltering devotion to these ideals he was driven from his native land, persecuted in person and in reputation.

Endowed with talents of the highest order, distinguished for his broad learning, and hailed as the champion of liberalism in Germany, he came to this country at a time when American life, as has been indicated, was in the initial stages of cultural and national evolution. With an unswerving devotion to his ideals of social, political, and religious freedom he identified himself with the chief reform movements of the times. In the lecture room of the College, from the pulpit and political platform, and through the press he contributed to the introduction of those German ideals which, by fusing with the best spirit of American civilization, were to become an important factor in the growth of our composite national culture. He was convinced that the highest of American and German ideals tended toward the same end:[1] a freer and more perfect humanity. While in character and aspirations he remained a true German he was at the same time a loyal and devoted citizen of this country.

In the sphere of higher education he was a living exponent of German freedom and thoroughness in teaching and in learning, thus contributing by precept and example to the remodeling of the American universities upon the German plan.[2] In the field of modern language instruction, especially of German, he was a pathfinder.

[1] It is interesting to note that several years before he left Europe he wrote the following, anticipating his future mission in this country: "Wenn es als die höchste Aufgabe des amerikanischen Gemeinwesens gilt, die Idee der Freiheit und Gleichheit in reinster Form zu verwirklichen, so muss von Deutschland als dem Mittelpunkt der ganzen neuen Bildung auch für Amerika der tiefe geistige Gehalt ausgehen, der allein die Grundlage seines Bestrebens ausmachen kann"; cf. Haupt, 146.

[2] Cf. *Works,* III, 291ff.

In matters of religion he found New England held in the bonds of sectarian prejudices, but seeking after those universal principles of faith that are convincing and inspiring to all hearts and minds. By his interpretation of German literature and idealistic philosophy, and by expounding the liberalism and spirituality of Schleiermacher he contributed in some measure to the spreading of religious principles which opened the way for a new religious life and a more scientific theology in this country. In view of the central position which religious thought still occupied in the American mind of his time his influence was that of a spiritual liberator who might have risen to national eminence had his career not been cut short by an untimely death.

True to his principles of reform he threw all the weight of his influence upon the side of the antislavery movement also. "I thank God," he exclaimed,[1] "that I have been allowed to embark in this great ark of liberty, floating upon the deluge of slavery that covers the East and the West, and bearing within it the seeds of the regeneration of the human race."

Personally he was preeminently a lovable character. The traits of his nature which most strongly impressed themselves upon people were his charming courtesy and his thoughtfulness of others. His portrait shows a face which reveals the rare and lofty spirit within. W. E. Channing describes him thus:[2] "He was a hero, a man of lion heart, victorious over fear, gathering strength and animation from danger, and bound the faster to duty by its hardships and privations; and at the same time he was a child in simplicity, sweetness and innocence. His countenance, which at times wore a stern decision, was generally lighted up with a beautiful benignity; and his voice, which expressed when occasion required it an inflexible will, was to many of us musical beyond expression from the deep tenderness which it breathed." His heart beat in unison with humanity. Although endowed with superior intellectual qualities and refined tastes he had the greatest

[1] Ibid., I, 458.

[2] *Channing's Works,* 614.

respect for minds trained in simple habits, and the broadest sympathies with ordinary laboring men. Nature, too, was a perpetual joy to him; it was a part of that worship which was always arising from his soul to the creator of the universe. His wife tells [1] us that he would step out of his path to avoid crushing the most common flower, that he looked up at the stars nightly with the same devout admiration as if they had just been hung in the unfathomable depths of the heavens, and that he rejoiced at the sight of the rising sun every morning as if it had just been created and he was beholding it for the first time.

Such is the record of his life and services. It was a career of disappointments, but the trials which he had to bear never conquered his spirit nor clouded his hope. After being expelled from positions of honor in Germany he secured in this country a sphere of activity which again opened up to him the opportunity of support and usefulness. But in spite of his great attainments and ability his life in the United States was one of hard struggle and narrow circumstances. Had he been less devoted to truth and duty, and ready to compromise, he might have gained high position,—at least a home and a comfortable living. To superficial observers his life may have seemed a failure; but, to use the words of W. H. Channing,[2] "in all that is best worth living for,—growth, peace, love, usefulness, honor, and abiding presence in grateful memories, Karl Follen was crowned with a perfect success."

The news of Follen's sudden death cast a shadow of deep gloom over his large circle of friends. In speaking of his tragic end, Bryant,[3] who had learned to love and admire him in New York, eulogized him as follows: "The world had not a firmer, a more ardent, a more consistent friend of liberty. No man could have known him, even slightly, without being strongly impressed by the surpassing benignity of his temper. He is taken from us by a mysterious Providence in the midst

[1] *Works,* I, 406.

[2] *Christian Examiner,* XXXIII, 54f.

[3] Goodwin, *Life of Bryant,* I, 377.

of his usefulness." Charles Sumner,[1] who had been his pupil at Harvard, wrote to a friend: "Dr. Follen is gone; able, virtuous, learned, good, with a heart throbbing to all that is honest and humane." Harriet Martineau [2] characterized him as the most remarkable and greatest man she had met in America. Dr. Channing [3] paid him the high tribute of being on the whole one of the best men he had ever known: "His loss is one of the greatest bereavements of my life. * * * I honored and loved him above most friends. * * * Such sweetness and such nobleness have seldom been joined. He was one of the few who won my heart and confidence."

In the following lines, Whittier [4] has immortalized the name of his departed friend:

Friend of my soul! as with moist eye
    I look upon this page of thine,
Is it a dream that thou art nigh,
    Thy mild face gazing into mine?

That presence seems before me now,
    A placid heaven of sweet moonrise,
When, dew-like, on the earth below
    Descends the quiet of the skies.

The calm brow through the parted hair,
    The gentle lip which knew no guile,
Softening the blue eye's thoughtful care
    With the bland beauty of thy smile.

Thou livest, Follen! not in vain
    Hath thy fine spirit meekly borne
The burthen of Life's cross of pain,
    And the thorned crown of suffering won.

'Tis something to a heart like mine
    To think of thee as living yet;
To feel that such a light as thine
    Could not in utter darkness set.

[1] *Life and Letters,* II, 133.

[2] *Society in America,* III, 75f.

[3] *Channing's Works,* 608.

[4] *Poetical Works,* Riverside Edition, IV, 30ff.

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